



**CITY OF HART**  
**407 S. STATE ST.**  
**HART, MI 49420**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL - COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS**  
**April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024**  
**MINUTES – Approved**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Vicki Platt, Councilors Justin Adams, Catalina Burillo, and Dean Hodges

**ABSENT:** Jim Evans, , Amanda Klotz, and Kris Trygstad

**OTHERS PRESENT:** City Manager – Rob Splane, City Clerk – Karla Swihart, BioPure Superintendent – Paul Cutter, Jim Cunningham, Eric and Deana Fox, Sharon Hallack, Dick Huntington, Garry Mckeen, and Art Willick

Mayor Platt called the meeting to order; following the roll call, then led the Council in the pledge of allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

- J. Adams motioned to approve the agenda and was supported by C. Burillo
  - Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Absent: 3

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- Eric Fox, running for probate County Judge, for Oceana County whose current Judge Brad Lambrix is retiring. As I look around, I know most of the people here. I feel I have lots to offer this community which I've been a business owner now for over 20years and a resident my whole life. I've had the honor of representing tons of people over the past years and I'd like to continue to do that as the County's probate judge and would like your support at the primary and general election this year.
- Gary Mckeen, Oceana County Planning Commission, as of February 1<sup>st</sup> I've been on the planning commission for 8 years and have been elected to be Chair, I came to inform the City of Hart we sent out a email MSU extension program we are offering to all townships, city's and villages in the County for Planning n Zoning and this is on May the 16<sup>th</sup> which will be held in Hart at the ESD building/County Building on Griswold and it will be from 6:30pm-8:30pm, it is free to anyone who would like to attend. The guest speaker will be MSU Extension Mary Riley.
- Dick Huntington, Creeks had a good meeting a week ago with City Manager and Councilman Hodges, spoke with the attorney, and I think at least my feeling was the attorney understood what we are trying to do with the subdivision. Looks like all we are doing is waiting for a redraft. Hopefully it comes back with what we discussed.

**CORRESPONDENCE, EVENTS, PRESENTATIONS:**

- Introduction – Chris Ter Haar, Park Recreation Superintendent  
Chris comes from a long background in working with Parks and Recreation, Chris is a member of the community and we look forward to a great season ahead.
- Hart Police Department Annual Report  
2023 Year End Report  
This report reviews activities the Hart Polcie Department has been involved in ovet the past 2023 calendar year. The report contains information on department personal and compares crimes and complaints with previous years.  
In 2023, the Hart Public School System, in collabortaion with the Hart Police Department, submitted a grant to the State of Michigan Office of School Safety to employ a full-time School Resource Officer for the district. The Office of School Safety approved the grant, allosing D/Sgt. Skipski to be the School Resource Officer for the Hart Public School system. D/Sgt. Skipski had already been working with the school officials before receiving this grant, with the school aslo requesting D/Sgt. Skipski to be its School Resource Officer. D/Sgt Skipski behan his School Resrounce Offier duties at the beginning of the school year. This three (3) year grant pays for half of the officer's wage and benefits, with the school district paying the remainder of the wages and benefits for the officer.  
On Monday, Decemeber 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Officer Pomorski worked his last shift with the Hart Police Department. Officer Pomorski was hired full-time in August 2023 due to receiving the State of Michigan Office of School Safety grant for a full-time School Resource Officer. Officer Pomorski accepted full-time employment with the Grand Traverse

County Sheriff's office. On behalf of the Hart Police Department, I would like to thank Officer Pomorski for his time with the department and wish Officer Pomorski nothing but the best in his future endeavors.

On Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Officer Ryder worked his last shift as a full-time officer with the Hart Police Department. Officer Ryder was hired full-time in June 2022 after Officer Shawn Anderson's resignation. Officer Ryder accepted full-time employment with the Roosevelt Police Department in Muskegon. Officer Ryder will still be employed by the department on a part-time status. On behalf of the Hart Police Department, I would like to thank Officer Ryder for this time with the department on this full-time status.

With the department having (2) officers accepting full-time employment with other agencies, I completed interviews to fill the vacancies. On Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Officer Sean Robb was offered and accepted full-time employment with the Hart Police Department. Officer Robb has twenty (20) years of law enforcement experience working with the Clare County Sheriff's office. Officer Robb was also previously employed by the State of Michigan Department of Corrections as a corrections officer at the Muskegon Prison. I believe Officer Robb will be a great addition to the department and a much-needed part of making the department run throughly and sufficiently.

In 2023 the Hart Police Department submitted 249 incident reports to the Oceana County Prosecutor's Office for review regarding criminal complaints. The Oceana County Prosecutor's Office received 897 incident reports from the Oceana County Sheriff's Office and 334 incident reports from the Michigan State Police, Hart Post. The Hart Police Department submitted the third-highest number of reports for review by the Oceana County Prosecutor's Office. It should be noted that there are a total of six (6) police departments in Oceana County.

On Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at approximately 4:40am, the Hart Police Department was dispatched to the 20-block of State Street referencing a shots fired complaint. As officers arrived on the scene, the responding officer heard a single gunshot. Responding officers later located a 44-year old Hart man laying in a parking lot in the area. The man is suspected of having walked off the roof on a local business downtown and landed in the parking lot. A handgun was located at the scene, which officers seized. The man is suspected of discharging the handgun into an apartment occupied by two (2) individuals at the time, a 40-year old Hart man and a 45-year old Hart woman. As the man walked off the business rooftop, the handgun discharged as the man struck the pavement in the parking lot. The man was transported by Life EMS to Trinity Health Muskegon Hospital in Muskegon for his injuries. No other injuries were reported as a result of this incident. An arrest warrant was later authorized by the Oceana County Prosecutor's Office for the man for Count 1: Weapons – Firearms – Discharge in or at a Building and Count 2: Weapons – Felony Firearms. The Hart Police Department was assisted by the Oceana County Sheriff's Office, Life EMS and the Hart Fire Department.

The Hart Police Department, as of this year, has three (3) pursuit-rated vehicles: a 2016 Ford Interceptor SUV, a 2019 Ford Interceptor SUV, and 2022 Ford Interceptor SUV. The decision to keep the 2016 Ford Interceptor and not remove the vehicle from service was due to allowing an extra vehicle for use during City events and an extra patrol vehicle for use in case another patrol vehicle is in for service. D/Sgt. Skipski has also utilized the 2016 Ford Interceptor SUV during his School Resource Officer duties. All officers have utilized all vehicles well, and I have received no major complaints or issues regarding any of the vehicles. Besides the occasional recall notice for repairs, all patrol vehicles have been running well.

The Hart Police Department continually strives to train and keep updated on new and changing laws. The Hart Police Department continues to be involved in the West Michigan Criminal Justice Training Consortium. The department's commitment is 30% of the State Training Fund the department receives during the year. The department continues to have instructors in Firearms, Defensive Tactic, Tasers and First Aid/CPR, Active Shooter Response, Bleeding Control, and Skid car made possible through the consortium. The department held its training in April 2023 at West Shore Community College training facility. Training consisted of Taser Re-Certification, Mandatory Firearms Lecture, Defensive Tactic (PPTC) Lecture/Practical and First Aid/CPR/AED Lecture/Practical. The department also conducts Firearms Qualifications twice a year, Spring and Fall qualifications, which consist of day and night shoot. The department currently utilizes the Hart Long Rifles range to conduct its qualifications. The Hart Long Rifles allow the department to utilize the range at no cost.

The Hart Police Department continues to offer the TEAM program, Teaching, Educating and Mentoring, to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at the Hart Middle School. This program is very well received by the students and staff alike. The TEAM program ranges from K-12<sup>th</sup> grade and covers drug awareness to gun safety to bullying. An annual TEAM golf outing is also held yearly to cover costs from the program. This year's golf outing was held on Sunday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at the Benona Shores Golf Club in Shelby and over \$6,100 was raised.

The Hart Police Department recently participated in an annual grant to continue teaching STEP to our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. STEP (Student Tools for Emergency Planning) is a Michigan State Police/Homeland Security grant that allows certified instructors to teach preparation techniques during national and inclement weather emergencies. After the course, each student is given a STEP backpack (go-bag) containing various emergency preparation items. The class's goal is to encourage the students to continue to add emergency equipment to their backpacks in case of a real emergency.

The Hart Police Department conducted bicycle safety classes at John Gurney Park this past summer. Bicycle safety items were distributed, and a bicycle parade was held throughout the park.

D/Sgt. Skipski also completed several CPR/First Aid classes within the Hart Community, allowing for American Heart Association certification for area residents.

In 2023, the Hart Police Department instructed drug awareness classes to the WSCC Criminal Justice Tech Prep class. The tech prep class comprises are high school students interested in Law Enforcement as a future career. Hart High School is also represented in the group. The drug awareness class is also taught to the Hart High School health students each year.

The Hart Police Department continues participating in the Bulletproof Vest Program, which allows departments that qualify to be reimbursed 50% of the vest's total cost. In 2023, a bulletproof vest cost approximately \$1,048.00. The department has been part of this program for several years and has assisted in purchasing new bulletproof vest for full-time and part-time officers.

The Hart Police Department was awarded a grant that allowed for the purchase of traffic control strobe lighting. This lighting enables officers to be more visible and safer at accident scenes, traffic control, or any other function that requires nighttime visibility. It also helps to eliminate the use of road flares, which can be dangerous at accident scenes when vehicle fluids are released.

The Hart Police Department was also awarded a grant to the DALMAC organization (Dick Allen Lansing to Machinaw tour), which allows for a monetary contribution for the purchase of bicycle safety items such as lighting, bells, and bicycle helmets. This year's grant was approved for \$2,500.

#### **Detective Sergeant/ School Resource Officer:**

D/Sgt. Skipski finished up another busy but successful year. D/DSgt Skipski was once again tasked with high-profile and long-term investigative complaints. This allows the officer to work with various state, local and federal agencies to assist with complaints that exceed local jurisdiction. This also opens up positive and more valuable resources to enhance investigative leads and crucial support efforts. These agencies include the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Homeland Security, Michigan State Police, SSCENT, and the state multi-jurisdictional fraud task force.

Due to recent homeland security threats, D/Dgt. Skipski has worked with both the State Police Analytics Department and Homeland Security to monitor any potential physical threats to large school functions. These agencies were utilized during the Hart High School Homecoming football game, during which several threats to large gatherings in Michigan were detected. The information that was provided to the Hart Police Department encompassed physical threats as well as cyber threats.

D/Sgt. Skipski has also assumed the official role of School Resource Officer for Hart Public Schools. D/Sgt. Skipski has been given an office in Hart Middle School where he works out of and responds to complaints, threats and any additional details that the school requests him to assist with. D/Sgt Skipski has also instructed classes for students and staff at Hart Public Schools, covering topics such as CPR, First Aid, Bleeding Control, Active Shooter Response, Drug Recognition, Sexting, Bullying, and a host of other topics. The school has also called upon the officer to investigate numerous issues occurring at the school. Vaping habits have slowed down quite a bit in our school

system. This is credited to the partnership and cooperation between the school administration and the School Resource Officer. D/Sgt. Skipski has maintained a close relationship with school administrators and attends all board meetings. D/Sgt. Skipski has chaperoned school dances, has become active in the School Leadership Group and has coordinated and assisted with the second annual Ride with Pirate Pride.

Safety Pup has been implemented as a safety teaching tool at our lower-level grades, allowing D/Sgt. Skipski to instruct basic safety topics with Safety Pup present. Several magic performances by D/Sgt. Skipski has also been implemented in our schools to reinforce safety topic in a fun way.

D/Sgt. Skipski has also overseen lockdown drills at our various campuses and completed written documentation of the drills, which Emergency Management requires. This includes fire safety drills.

The Hart Police Department, in conjunction with the Hart High School, Eagle Towing, and Jerry's Towing, is also happy to offer the "Ride with Pirate Pride" vehicle giveaway once again. This is the second annual giveaway, which allows a licensed high school student to be awarded the vehicle depending on grades, active participation in the school, sports, etc. The program was a huge success last year, and the Hart Police Department would like to thank Mr. John Heykoop for his generous vehicle donation for the second year in a row. Numerous other prizes are given out for runners-up obtained from various local businesses. Currently, this is the only active program in Oceana County. This program is also reinforced by the safety lectures involving safe driving and changing lanes for stopped emergency vehicles. The Hart Police Department is extremely excited to be involved in Ride with Pirate Pride.

D/Sgt. Skipski also continues to maintain officer certification in firearms, taser, CPR, firearms lecture and active school shooter response. Having an in-house instructor in these topics makes the department more flexible in scheduling the mandated training and allows for more one-on-one time when certifying.

At the end of 2023, the Hart Police Department has six (6) full-time officers and two (2) part-time officers. The two (2) part-time officers are employed full-time with the Muskegon County Sheriff's Office and the Roosevelt Park Police Department.

In 2023, there were 250 arrests and a total of 1,908 complaints or calls for service. In 2022, there were 199 arrests and a total of 1,789 complaints or calls for service.

The following is a list of complaints received for 2023, along with the last two previous years.

<u>File Class:</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Criminal Sexual Conduct	9	4	9
Assaults / Domestic Assaults	53	63	59
Felonious Assaults	8	4	3
Intimidation/Threats/Harassment	48	53	43
Arson	0	1	0
Breaking & Entering / Unlawful Entry	16	10	13
Larceny	87	107	93
Motor Vehicle Theft	1	3	2
Fraud / Check Complaints	20	32	38
Embezzlement	2	2	1
Malicious Destruction of Property	38	42	43
Obstruction of Justice	70	46	66
Disorderly Persons	44	54	88
Operating While Intoxicated	7	9	10
Traffic Violations:	120	150	130

Thank you for your time, and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Chief of Police, J. Salazar  
Hart Police Department

- VFW communication – RE: Military tank relocation Letter from VFW Post 1329

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- Approval of minutes from March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
- Bills, Claims, Payroll
- Reports of Boards, Commissions, and Committees
- Department Reports – Police/BioPure/Public Works/Energy/C&E Dvlp
  - J. Adams motioned to approve Consent Agenda and supported by J. Evans
    - Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Absent: 3

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- NONE

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- Society for Human Resource Management Certification – Approved
- Special Event Permit – Hart Hills Gravel Bike Race – Approved
- Special Event Permit – Asparagus Festival – Approved
- Special Event Permit – Music on the Commons series – Approved
- Special Event Permit – Hart Sparks – Approved

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:**

**Updates:**

- Veteran's Memorial Park Project – EGLE approved in March – Final approval was sent today from the DNR for the project to move forward. The bidding process will begin in the next few weeks.
- DPW department has been monitoring the emergency repaired intersection on Main Street and will resurface the street as soon the asphalt plants begin production.
- HydroCorp is wrapping up the cross-connection inspection project. Less than 50 residents remain that have not responded to City efforts, water shut offs will be the next step in seeking compliance of the State mandated safety measure.
- City Treasurer has Michigan Treasurers Institute training the week of April 22<sup>nd</sup> which will complete the three-year training cycle leading up to certification.

**Legacy Topics:**

- Safe Routes to School trail project – pending State Approval projected bid spring 2024.

**Upcoming Topics:**

- Adoption of 5-year Park and Rec Master Plan (Currently back and forth negotiation with MDOT)
- Council review of rental inspection policies, procedures, and implementation. Chief Salazar is delayed due to 2 employee resignations and 2 employees parental leave)

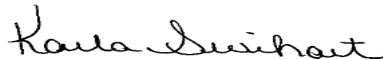
**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL:**

- J. Adams from the Heart board, Chalet downtown are all full for this summer and have been updated so that's exciting news.

**ADJOURN:**

- There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned upon a motion by J. Adams and supported by C. Burillo. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted



Karla Swihart, City Clerk