City of Hamilton, IL
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday September 8, 2026 at 7:00pm

1. **Call to Order** - *Roll Call* - Hamilton City Council met in regular session at 7:00 p.m. at the Hamilton City Hall on Tuesday, September 8, 2026. Mayor Casey called the meeting to order. Aldermen present: Andrew Asbury, Tommy Buckert, Brandon Wilson, Debbie Summers, Steve Schlatter and Bev Boone. Aldermen excused: none. Also present: Logan Gray Public Works; Police Chief Boley; Don Sewell, Building Inspector, and Logan Schrapf, City Clerk. Absent: Tom Hartzell, City Attorney

2. **Pledge of Allegiance** - Mayor Casey led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Minutes from Monday, August 17 2026** - Wilson made a motion to approve the *Minutes from August 17, 2026*. Asbury seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter, and Boone voting "aye". The motion carried.

4. **Mayor's Comments** - Hancock County Economic Development (HCED) - Mayor Casey attended a meeting of Hancock County Economic Development's partnership with the Great River Economic Development Foundation. Casey explained that HCED has experienced difficulty retaining an employee because of compensation and benefit limitations. The partnership is intending to provide additional resources and assist in hiring an individual specifically serving Hancock County. The annual membership dues were reported as $4,160.91. The matter is scheduled for further discussion under Finance.

WIRC Membership/Dues Mayor Casey clarified that the WIRC membership had previously been discussed at the May 4 Finance Committee meeting, at which time the City agreed to proceed with payment because WIRC is currently assisting the City with a housing grant.

The Corporate Levy Referendum the Council voted on missed the deadline to go on the ballot. The Council will have to reconsider the matter during a future election cycle if the Council wishes to proceed.

5. **Visitors** - Brian Frericks – QFB. The city had a 2-year contract with QFB for fixed electricity rates that expires in October 2026. Frericks gave a presentation explaining current rates Direct Energy submitted the lowest pricing. The Council decided to sign a 2-year contract at $0.08296kWh. Frericks also presented preliminary information concerning a community solar subscription that could provide 10% savings on qualifying electric usage. Summers made a motion to approve a 2-year contract. Buckert second the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter, and Boone voting "aye". The motion carried.

Peter Sowlles addressed the Council in regards to being a salesman for a start-up semiprofessional football team and was curious about what the rules and regulations for operating in Hamilton were. The council recommended getting approval to use the football field from the Park Board and the School Board. No action taken.

6. **Finance** - Summer's made a motion to approve *Selected Check Registers.* Schlatter seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter and Boone all voting "aye." The motion carried.

Summers read the 8/20 Finance Meeting Minutes. The committee discussed the City's fiscal condition, general fund revenues and expenditures, department spending, utilizing TIF funds for eligible expenses, and the need to improve the City's Unrestricted General Fund. Other matters discussed included Police Department spending and overtime, possible sale of a police vehicle, the recent police drone purchase, animal-control expenses, investment of City funds through CDARS, the upcoming audit, City website updates, and possible restructuring of Council committees.

Video Gaming Revenue Allocation was discussed. Mayor Casey proposed changing the current allocation from 75% Fire / 25% Police to: 50% Fire Department / 50% General Fund. The Mayor reported that City Attorney Tom Hartzell advised that the previous allocation had been established by motion and therefore could be modified by Council motion without adopting a new ordinance. The Council also asked the City Clerk to provide the Gaming Revenue Reports at each Council Meeting. The reallocation was tabled by Summers.

Council members discussed the City's General Fund needs, current condition of Police Department vehicles, future Fire Department equipment and truck needs, and the importance of maintaining adequate funding for essential public-safety equipment. Several members emphasized that the Fire Department should be directly informed and allowed to provide information concerning anticipated equipment needs before the allocation is changed.

Hancock County Economic Development Membership and Dues were discussed. The council determined that they had not seen any benefit to the city from being a member. It was also noted that the City dropped out of membership at one point for the same reason and have not benefited since rejoining. The council decided to research the current state of the organization more and bring the membership back to Committee discussion. Summers *made a motion to not renew membership and dues with the Hancock County Economic Development.* Schlatter seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter and Boone all voting "aye." The motion carried.

7. **Buildings and Grounds, Permits and Zoning** - There were 2 solar permits and 1 permit for a privacy fence. Buckert made a motion to approve all 3 permits. Summers seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter and Boone all voting "aye." The motion carried.

8. **Public Works** - Logan Gray from the Water Department gave updates. There is tree trimming starting on Warsaw Road. The Clock is painted and is ready for assembly. The 17th and Walnut Culvert Project is completed. Crosswalks are painted. The new valve is in for the blowdown. Once the actuator arrives, they will install both. There are chlorine problems in Elvaston. It has been about a year since they have done a chlorine burn and they might need to do another burn this month.

9. **Economic Development / Tourism** - Wilson set a committee meeting for September 16 at 5:30pm. There were 140 contestants for the Labor Day Weekend Car Show. September 19 is the Turbine dedication ceremony at 10:00am. September 19 is Honey Fest and Wheels and Deals on Broadway. More Contestant Applications for Baby-Bee and Queen-Bee are still available. There is a meeting on September 14 at 6:00pm for Baby-Bee and Queen-Bee contestants. There is a 3 on 3 Basketball tournament during Honey Fest with applications available online, at city hall, and day of the event. There are 40 vendors currently signed up for Honey Fest including GLO, Animal Control, Food Vendors, Dadants, etc. Vendor spacing is still under review.

10. **Health and Safety** - There was a First Reading for an Ordinance pertaining to Recreational Vehicle, Trailer, and Storage Containers. The Council discussed the language of the Ordinance and decided Section 3 needed further discussion with Attorney Hartzell. Mayor Casey tabled the Ordinance. Another First Reading will be scheduled with discussed changes.

Alderman Boone was attending virtually via Zoom and exited the meeting at 8:23pm.

Asbury read the Committee Meeting Minutes from August 27. Chief Boley gave updates concerning activity, staffing/workflow, officer responsibilities, performance expectations and overtime. Specific employee matters were reserved for executive session.

Fire: There were updates concerning hose testing, valve repairs, Truck 99's electrical issues and Truck 95/future equipment needs.

Animal Control: We discussed the cat currently in City care, donations, the anonymous letter concerning cats in a neighborhood, and the possibility of addressing concentrated stray-cat problems. No action was taken.

Nuisance Properties: We discussed ongoing enforcement problems and progress at 50 S. 16th Street, along with mowing/property-maintenance violations, citations, liens and difficulties dealing with absentee/company-owned properties.

An Executive Session needed to be held to discuss a personnel manner. Asbury made a motion to enter Executive Session Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1). Wilson seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter, voting "aye." Boone was absent. The motion carried. The Council entered Executive Session at 8:47pm.

Asbury made a motion to exit the Executive Session at 9:49pm. Wilson seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter, and voting "aye." Boone was Absent.

11. **Adjournment** - Asbury made a motion to adjourn the regular Council Meeting. Wilson seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter, and voting "aye." Boone was Absent. The motion carried. Meeting ended at 9:50.

Approved by the Hamilton City Council on September 21, 2026

_____ Logan Schrapf, City Clerk

Approved:

_____ Bocephus Casey, Mayor