City of Hamilton, IL
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
Monday September 21, 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 Monday September 21, 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: Ryan Brotherton, Public Works Director; Tom Hartzell, City Attorney; Officer Skelly, and Logan Schrapf, City Clerk. Absent: None

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

3. **Minutes from Tuesday, September 8 2026** - Buckert made a motion to approve the *Minutes from September 8, 2026*. Summers seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter, and Boone voting "aye". The motion carried.

4. **Mayor's Comments** - Casey reported on Video Game Revenue. YTD, Hamilton has made $100,302. In August, the revenue was $14,264.

5. **Visitors** - John Mason reported on fundraising efforts to purchase a trailer for storage and transportation of the City's American flags for Flags Over the Mississippi. Mason had made a donation from the Theresa Mason Memorial Fund. Approximately $2,700 including matching contributions had been secured from area businesses and organizations, bringing available funding for the project to approximately $4,500. Council thanked those involved for their support of the project.

Hancock County Economic Development (HCED) - Ashlynn Housewright and Amy Bringer addressed the Council regarding Hancock County Economic Development and its partnership with Great River Economic Development Foundation (GREDF). They explained that GREDF provides executive and administrative support while the organization searches for a Hancock County representative. Services in Hancock County include grant assistance, business support, housing initiatives, CEO program, etc. The Council discussed representation, staffing, regional collaboration, and the City's potential membership. No action taken.

Gwen Crawford (TIF Representative) and Geoffrey Thompson (Klinger Engineer) - Thompson provided an overview of the City's proposed water-system improvements. The project currently consists of five components: south intake improvements, north intake improvements, water-treatment-plant control upgrades, water-tower rehabilitation, and water-main replacements. Preliminary total project cost was estimated at approximately $5.5 million. The Council discussed traditional financing alternatives, including IEPA State Revolving Fund and USDA Rural Development financing. It was explained that the City's current circumstances make IEPA funding unlikely based upon the State's priority-ranking system. USDA funding could involve a lengthy process and limited grant availability.

Gwen Crawford, representative of Economic Development Group (EDG) who is the City's registered municipal advisor, discussed financing the improvements through bonds supported by TIF revenues. The Council discussed potentially leveraging revenues from the City's two TIF districts and the remaining life of the Downtown TIF. Financing of up to approximately $7 million was discussed as a possibility, subject to further financial analysis and the amount of available TIF revenue. The existing TIF surplus agreement involving the school district and the Ameren/dam parcel was discussed. Crawford explained that the agreement would need to be amended if the City intends to retain a portion of those revenues for bond payments. As part of discussions with the school district, the City could

potentially include approximately $1 million for the school's proposed parking-lot project in the financing package. Council discussed seeking a 12-year extension of TIF District No. 1. Crawford explained that the affected taxing bodies would need to support or not object to the extension and that legislative approval would ultimately be required. No action taken.

Potential projects to support the justification for an extension, include future Keokuk Street projects, the Boley project, development surrounding Montebello, and other economic-development opportunities. Crawford explained contemplated bonds would be structured as alternate revenue bonds supported by TIF revenues and not by increasing property taxes. Council emphasized the importance of preserving TIF funds for residential, infrastructure such as the water intake, and economic-development projects. The next contemplated step is discussion with the school district regarding amendment of the existing surplus agreement. EDG would assist with the necessary amendment and solicit financing proposals if an agreement is reached. A public bond hearing would be required later in the financing process. No bonds or final financing were approved at this meeting.

Crawford provided information regarding establishment of a Business District. A Business District could allow the City to impose up to an additional 1% sales tax within the designated area, including applicable online retail transactions delivered to addresses within the district. The revenue would be placed into a dedicated fund and could be used for eligible economic-development and redevelopment expenses. The district would generally correspond with the City's existing TIF areas. There would need to be a public-hearing, adoption process, and Department of Revenue filing deadlines. No formal action was taken.

EDG reviewed the City's recently established residential improvement grant program. The program provides reimbursement of 75% of approved costs, up to $5,000, for owner-occupied properties and 50% of approved costs, up to $5,000, for landlord-owned properties. Eligible improvements discussed include windows, siding, roofs, porches, ramps, dead tree removal, water/sewer service-line repairs or replacements, etc. Casey emphasized the potential use of the program for replacement of lead water-service lines within the TIF districts. Approximately $50,000 has been initially designated for the program. Applications will be reviewed for eligibility before work proceeds, with final reimbursement subject to documentation and Council approval.

6. **Finance** - Council discussed balances in various restricted and designated funds and the permitted uses of those funds, including the Hamilton Fire/Rescue Fund and Water Depreciation Fund. Summers made a motion to approve *The Treasurer's Report.* Schlatter seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter and Boone all voting "aye." The motion carried.

The City Hall computer firewall is approaching end-of-life. A quote of approximately $6,718.82 was discussed, including equipment/software licensing and labor, with the firewall licensing covering approximately five years. The matter will be referred to the Finance Committee for further review.

A Finance Committee Meeting was scheduled for October 5, at 5:00pm.

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

8. **Public Works** - Public Works reported that the chlorine conversion at the water plant had begun and system flushing was expected to follow. Repairs to the City clock were discussed.

Additional replacement components, including clock windings and gearbox-related parts, are being investigated. Tree-removal bids for dead trees located in City rights-of-way are due September 30. Public Works also reported a recent PLC failure at the water plant. A replacement card was located, programmed, and installed, returning the system to operation. Street patching and right-of-way maintenance were discussed.

Mayor Casey reported that he intends to work with Public Works to identify eligible street-patching expenses within the City's TIF districts and determine whether qualifying costs can be reimbursed through TIF.

9. **Economic Development / Tourism** - Council discussed the recent Honey Fest, Wheels and Deals on Broadway, turbine dedication, and related community activities. Council expressed appreciation to City staff, volunteers, businesses, organizations, sponsors, and residents who assisted with the events. The Economic Development Committee reported that approximately 38 vendors participated in Honey Fest. The committee reviewed expenses associated with the pageant, basketball tournament, entertainment, dunk tank, etc. Future community events were discussed, including Honey Fest 2027, Lantern Night, electronic recycling, and creation of a possible sponsorship/donation subcommittee for future City events. Committee also discussed potential fundraising activities and the need for additional traffic cones, signs, and barricades for Public Works.

(Alderman Boone was attending meeting on Zoom and dropped out of the meeting at this point).

List of Mentions and Thank You's for Honey Fest 2026

Set-up and tear down – Mayor Casey, Tommy Buckert, Richard Berry, and Colin Ross. National Anthem – Nora Williams. DJ – Top Dogg Productions and Travis Conover. Buzz – The Burlington Bees and Debbie Summers. McGruff The Crime Dog – Steve Parker and Debbie Summers. Car Showcase – Steve Ashley's 1929 Ford Model A Huckster Wagon. Banner, posters, and McGruff coloring sheets – Royal Printing and Andrew Asbury. News coverage and photography – Mississippi Valley Publishing with Richard Wilson, Goldie Franklin, and Michael Helenthal. Trophies & Medals – The Trophy Outlet. Free bottled water – Fortress Bank. Free popsicles – Marine Bank. 20" BMX Iowa Hawkeyes bicycle giveaway – Berry's Bicycle Shop and Richard Berry.

HONEYFEST PAGEANT - Coordinators – Madi Wilson and Shilea Wilson. Judges – Esther Harding, Tonya Hunold, and Nikki Mason. Gifts – RePete and Go Figure Crafting with Ariana Brown. Jr. Queen – 1st: Peighton Johnson, 2nd: Brielle Baum. Little Bee – 1st: Brynzlei Wilsey, 2nd: Letty Feagain. Baby Bee – 1st: Ace Johnson, 2nd: Ada Kate Hackett, 3rd: Maisey Brown Most Talented Bee – 1st: Brielle Baum, 2nd: Letty Feagain.

BEE-BALL TOURNAMENT - Coordinator – Luke Hackett. Check-in – Kim Taylor. Face Painting – Gabby Hamelton. 1st Place Winners – Keokuk Chiefs. 2nd Place – Hamilton Hawks. 3rd Place – Elite Mambas.

WH TITAN SPORTS BOOSTER'S DUNK TANK

A huge thank-you to the WH Titan Sports Boosters; President Casey Shaw and Amanda Shaw for manning the Dunk Tank at this year's Hamilton Honeyfest celebration. Thank you to these dunk participants; Mayor Casey, Police, Jason Church, Richard Yates, Ann Pierce, Layah Pierce, Chandler Dadant, Cole Turner, and Dawn Johnson.

WHEELS & DEALS ON BROADWAY - Set-up and tear down – Mayor Casey, Tommy Buckert, Sarah Rahn, and Colin Ross. DJ – BHB Productions with Noel Brown. Band – Hamilton High School Band.

CAR CRUISE-IN - Coordinator and car placement – Richard Yates. Showcase – Robbie Reed's 1968 Dodge Super Bee. 23 show cars joined us for the Cruise-In. Flyers – Royal Printing and Andrew Asbury. Trophies – The Trophy Outlet. Car Choice Awards - Mayor Casey, Chief Mike Boley, and Fire Chief Michael Helenthal. Cornhole Tournament Coordinators – Kaci Ames, Wes Ames, and Kris Morgan.

And a SPECIAL THANK YOU to all the vendors, University of Illinois Extension, NEMO Beekeepers, Dadant's, Hamilton Park District, Hamilton Public Works, Hamilton School District, Jason Church, Michelle Dorethy, Cindy Dupree, Hamilton Economic & Tourism Committee of Brandon "Cooper" Wilson, Debbie Summers, Tommy Buckert, Mayor Casey, and The City of Hamilton.

10. **Health and Safety** - Asbury said there were no updates to report from Police Chief Boley and Fire Chief Helenthal. Marlys had $367 in donations for Animal Control Fund. A water heater for The Animal Control building was discussed. The Committee is still looking at potential options before winter. Mayor Casey reported that the Police Department was actively investigating recent vehicle break-ins.

11. **Adjournment** - Wilson made a motion to adjourn the regular Council Meeting. Buckert seconded the motion. Roll was called with Asbury, Buckert, Wilson, Summers, Schlatter, and voting “aye.” Boone was Absent. The motion carried. Meeting ended at 8:45pm.

Approved by the Hamilton City Council on October 5, 2026

_____ Logan Schrapf, City Clerk

Approved:

_____ Bocephus Casey, Mayor