

# Behind the Scenes

JUNE 2023



**A monthly report from the City Administrator and Department Heads**

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# CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

## May 8

◆Voted 7-0 to approve the request of Deb Cuff to change zoning from “I-1, Light Industrial” to “R-2, Mixed Density Neighborhood” for property commonly addressed as 133 Park St. Councilwoman Joy Huffaker was absent.

◆Voted 7-0 to amend Hastings City Code Section, adding the definition of motorized vehicle racetracks and adding motorized vehicle racetracks as a permitted principal use in I-2 Districts in Table 200-1.

◆Voted 7-0 to approve the request of Doug and Tamra Ruhter to change zoning from “R-1, Urban Single Family Residential” to “C-3, Commercial Business” for property commonly addressed as 947 South Burlington Ave.

## May 21 City Council retreat

◆Department Head goals/ budget priorities, FY 24 General Increase and staffing needs

◆Comprehensive Plan update.

◆Strategic Plan overview.

◆Delegated Authority recommendation.

◆Ward Town Hall Meeting discussion.

◆LB840 (Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act) economic development tax discussion.

◆“F” Street construction, Franklin Avenue to Baltimore Avenue and “F” Street construction Baltimore Avenue to Marian Road



with an optional overpass/underpass at the railroad crossing.

## May 22

◆Vote 7-1 to approve a work order for Solar Field phase 2 that adds the administrative and engineering overhead and some material that is already in stock that is going toward the project. Councilman Marc Rowan dissented.

◆Voted 8-0 to approve the agreement with Nebraska Machinery Company for the purchase of a CAT Model 826K Landfill Compactor for the Hastings Solid Waste Landfill in the amount of \$795,000.

◆Voted 8-0 to approve the Interlocal Cooperation Act Agreement for Apprehension of Narcotics Dealers and Offenders (CANDO) between the counties

of Adams, Buffalo, Franklin, Hall, Kearney, Phelps and Clay, and the cities of Grand Island, Hastings, Kearney, Minden and Holdrege.

## Upcoming meetings

July 10 regular meeting

July 17 worksession

July 24 regular meeting



## Strategic Planning Q&A with Shawn Metcalf

**Q: What is strategic planning?**

**A:** Strategic planning is an opportunity for the City of Hastings to understand our community's needs and to build initiatives based on resident priorities. It is our long-term vision for the future. To that end, strategic planning is one of the most important products the city can provide to our residents.

**Q: Why is the city of Hastings engaging in a strategic planning process?**

**A:** One of the biggest challenges facing local governments is providing high quality-of-life for residents with limited resources. Additionally, each resident has their own opinion of what the city should be doing. Because of the competing needs, we understand that we can't please everyone; however, a strategic plan helps us understand what a majority of residents want, which then helps us to use our limited resources wisely.

**Q: What are some of the benefits of strategic planning?**

**A:** Benefits include having a single forward focused vision and direction, having a sense of responsibility and purpose, increased operational efficiency, increased trust, and improved satisfaction for residents, City Council, staff, and community partners.

**Q: What does the strategic planning process look like?**

**A:** Each Council member will recommend a few names of



City Administrator Shawn Metcalf discusses on KSNB Local 4, the city's plans to implement a strategic plan.

individuals who are willing to serve on the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) who will meet each month for approximately 9 months. To ensure equal representation, 8 members will be selected by the mayor, with 2 members from each of 4 wards. The committee's purpose is to listen to the aspirations and concerns of residents and work collaboratively to help the City Council understand community priorities. The SPAC will gather data via community outreach efforts, analyze results, compose a plan, and present a final report to City Council. Please reach out to your council members if you are interested in serving on the advisory board.

**Q: Isn't the Comprehensive Plan the same thing as the Strategic Plan?**

**A:** The Comprehensive Plan is a state mandated land-use plan. The Strategic Plan is a roadmap

for our future which addresses every area of the city, not just land use.

**Q: Is the strategic plan going to end up on a shelf and collect dust?**

**A:** The strategic plan is a living breathing document that will be looked at frequently and will be utilized to make ongoing decisions. Once implemented, we will provide quarterly updates to the community, and we will administer a yearly community survey to measure our progress.

**Q: How long does the entire process take?**

**A:** The process starts in July of 2023. Once the SPAC produces their final report, staff will identify projects and costs that align with the strategic plan to be implemented by October 2024.

**Q: I have more questions, who can I contact?**

**A:** Contact me, Shawn Metcalf, at [smetcalf@cityofhastings.org](mailto:smetcalf@cityofhastings.org).

# FIRE & RESCUE

## HASTINGS FIRE & RESCUE

May 2023



### TOTAL INCIDENTS

318

Fire 100

EMS 218

### Turnout Time

1:22

0:56

FIRE

EMS

**Turnout time** – the time elapsed from when the emergency dispatcher notifies the fire department of an emergency and when the first apparatus leaves the fire station.

**Travel time** – the time elapsed from when an apparatus begins to respond until its arrival on scene.

### Travel Time

4:28

4:00

FIRE

EMS

### Property Saved vs Property Lost

Dollars Saved  
\$772,788



Losses  
\$1,150

### Total Training Hours

641

### Community Risk Reduction Efforts

Building Inspections:

9

Plan Reviews:

0

Violations Corrected:

12

Violation Notices:

43

Public Ed Contacts:

359

Code Consultations:

6

Fire Investigations:

4

### MAY EVENTS

- ~HFR participated in Give Hastings Day 2023 receiving \$3,860 in donations.
- ~Safety Demo showing dangers of hot cars to kids and pets.
- ~Attended the Library Block Party giving Fire Engine Tours and handouts.
- ~Began accepting applications for a Fire Inspector.
- ~Hosted the Hastings Area Mutual Aid Association Meeting at Station 2.
- ~Held the annual Officer's Retreat.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- ~Fire Academy 2023-2 started June 5th with four trainees.
- ~Battle of the Badges Blood Drive is on June 9th. Come donate and vote #TeamFire.
- ~Four station tours are scheduled for June with the Head Start Migrant Program and Pooh Corner Daycare/Preschool.
- ~EMT and Medic students will be completing their clinical ride time at HFR





**May 9 and 16, Chaplain Eddie Goff and Chief Adam Story provided lunches for officers and other staff in honor of National Police Week.**

**May 15, Anna Sorensen began her employment as the Communications Director. Anna has 27 years of experience in dispatching and supervision for law enforcement and medical emergencies.**

**May 18, the Defense Logistics Agency Disposition Services representatives from Battle Creek Michigan were present at the Hastings Police Department. The Hastings Police Department possesses an armored vehicle (MRAP) through the Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO). This armored vehicle is for protection and rescue incidents. Ofc. George Reitz, the lead MRAP driver, assisted the reps during their visit so that they could inspect the vehicle and review its use.**

**May 27, Cpl. Ethan Sharman held a presentation at the Hastings Public Library for the Summer Reading program. Corporal Sharman demonstrated some functions of the Department's drones and robot.**

**May 30, Officers participated in an on-duty firearms exercise at the Department firearms range. This training focused on segmented searching and engaging threats through doorways. Cpl. John Adams developed and led the training.**



	2023	2022	Year to Date Totals		Percent +/-
	May	May	YTD 2023	YTD 2022	
<b>Police</b>					
Total Calls for Service	2685	2253	14018	9862	42.1%
Incident Reports	281	305	1289	1405	-8.3%
Traffic Accidents	50	51	407	210	93.8%
Traffic Stops	354	470	2068	2186	-5.4%
Part I Crimes	156	162	682	781	-12.7%
Complaints Against Employee	1	2	13	10	30.0%
Use of Force Incidents	1	6	5	13	-61.5%
<b>Community Service Officers</b>					
Animal Calls	192	208	717	837	-14.3%
Animals Impounded	46	40	170	172	-1.2%
Code Enforcement	192	159	334	351	-4.8%
Complaints Against Employee	0	0	2	0	100.0%
<b>Communication Center</b>					
911 Calls	1157	967	4540	4176	8.7%
All Other Calls	4751	5604	22829	25712	-11.2%
Complaints Against Employee	0	0	1	2	-50.0%





# MUSEUM

**Photo 1: 'To What Remains' film (May 23), followed by video chat with Pat Scannon, the founder of Project Rover an organization dedicated to gathering information that can lead to the location, identification,**

**and repatriation of remains of U.S. service members who were killed in action.**

**Photo 2: The Museum took part in the Nebraska Tourism Commission's Statewide Brochure Swap in Kearney (May 17)**

**Photo 3: Adams Central was among the many school districts that visited the Hastings Museum during the month of May, to end the school year.**

**Photo 4: Talon Talk with live birds (May 2).**





## Summer Reading Program

To kick off the 2023 Summer Reading Program “All Together Now,” HPL hosted a Community Block Party on May 27. To celebrate the unique community of Hastings, several non-profit organizations were invited, offering demonstrations, free swag, and fun activities such as karaoke. Angus McGee’s Food Truck was also on site to provide delicious food! HPL also set up a Tech Table, demonstrating all the electronic STEM toys available at HPL; made balloon animals; painted faces; drew games with sidewalk chalk; and had stations to make giant bubbles.

Over 400 people attended the Block Party, and 182 people signed up for the Summer Reading Program! The kick-off party was a great success in promoting the Summer Reading Program, as well as bringing our community together to celebrate some of the amazing organizations Hastings has to offer.

## Upcoming at HPL:

◆ Happy Hands: Introduction to American Sign Language is a club for tweens ages 10-13 that offers lessons in the ASL alphabet, deaf culture, and more. Registration is required; visit the HPL online calendar for dates and times.

◆ Pre-K Club is offered to children joining a Kindergarten class at the end of the summer. Sessions will review skills and lessons children need to enter Kindergarten ready to learn. Visit the HPL online calendar for more details and to register!

◆ 2 p.m., July 8, Cowboy Poetry & Nighthawk Tunes with speaker Michael F. McDonald

◆ 3 p.m., July 10, A live demonstration of the West African Kora music.

◆ 5:15 p.m., July 12, Warrior of the People: How Susan La Flesche Overcame Racial & Gender Inequality to Become America’s First Indian Doctor with speaker Joe Starita.

◆ 2 p.m., July 17, Jammin’ Randy musical program.

◆ 2 p.m., July 24, Hands-on science with Dr. Oxygen.

◆ 6:30 p.m., July 27, Library Night at Duncan Field with baseball themed storytimes, prizes and the Bookmobile.



# ENVIRONMENTAL

## Notes from the Environmental Director – Marty Stange

This past May 23, Derek Zeisler and I attended the Nebraska Advance Nuclear Forum and learned efforts are being made to move forward with the development of a Hydrogen Hub for Nebraska, Missouri and Iowa.

During this meeting we were notified the Nebraska legislature approved funding for this project. We also learned this project is known as the Mid-Continent Clean Hydrogen Hub. This proposal was one of 33 out of 79 projects submitted for a second round submittal.

A second round proposal was submitted and next level of selection was scheduled to occur May 31.

It was obvious the Energy Industry is changing to address Climate Change issues. The changes in markets have already begun.

These changes are impacting how our local industries are and will operate in the future.

It will take continued efforts to monitor and to learn of evolving concepts and technology. Hastings has a great opportunity to be a part of this change which can benefit Hastings to grow and sustain its existing Energy and Agricultural Industries. The information that we learned is beneficial for comprehensive and strategic planning the city will be undertaking.

## Meet your Environmental Staff

Jenny Sidlo is our Assistant Environmental Engineer. She has been working for Hastings Utilities and the City of Hastings for the past 21 years. Much of her work involves sampling of water and wastewater discharges from various facilities. She also monitors our groundwater. This includes not only industrial and municipal wells but irrigation and domestic wells within our wellhead protection area.

This includes the Institutional Control Area required by EPA. The Institutional Control Area was set up to monitor groundwater use associated with the local Superfund Sites to prevent the public from drinking or being exposed to contaminated waters.

The citizens of Hastings and our wholesale customers can be assured the municipal water is safe, reliable and potable. Our municipal water has met and passed all water quality standards set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy.

As noted, above the activities to monitor the groundwater that will eventually pass into the Hastings area provides for the first line of defense in providing safe potable water. Sampling of private domestic, industrial and irrigation wells are collected each summer to check for nitrates, uranium and other metals. These samples give an idea of what could potentially be coming into the city for future planning. Jenny is one of many people who diligently work to insure that our drinking water is safe to drink. So enjoy drinking a glass of cool water knowing Jenny and others are keeping a watchful eye on the water quality.

## Regulatory Action

The Toxic Release inventory reports for the Whelan Energy Center were submitted to EPA. These reports provide information to the public on chemical compounds that are produced in the combustion of coal. The two main materials of interest are fly ash products and scrubber ash products. Fly ash is a pozzolanic material that is sold for use in concrete or used in soil stabilization. The fly ash compounds generated by the Whelan Energy Center is a non-hazardous material that complies with the NDEE guidelines for beneficial reuse. The scrubber ash is calcium hydroxide (lime) used to remove sulfur dioxide from the exhaust gas for Whelan Energy Center Unit 2. The scrubber ash product is mostly calcium sulfate and calcium hydroxide. The Whelan Energy Center Unit 2 scrubber ash is licensed with the Nebraska Department Agriculture as an agricultural soil amendment. Scrubber ash is a beneficial product to provide necessary sulfur for agriculture production. The calcium hydroxide has the benefit of raising soil pH that has become acidic due to use of anhydrous ammonia. In 2022, a total of 82,271 tons of ash material was sold or used for beneficial purposes.



# LANDFILL

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The week of June 17 is Waste and Recycling Workers Week, which reminds the public to thank all those in the solid waste and recycling industry for their dedication and hard work. That dedication extends to the 10 employees at The City of Hastings Solid Waste Landfill/Wood Waste Facility at 725 S. Southern Hills Drive.

The Landfill strives to provide an environmentally safe and integrated solid waste management system for Hastings and Adams County as well as Clay County, Nuckolls County, Webster County, Franklin County, Kearney County and communities within their borders.

In May, the Landfill had 2,603 customers who brought in 5,651.24 tons of Solid Waste and 224.83 tons of wood waste and 25.13 tons green waste.

The Landfill is an enterprise fund, which means it is self-supported through fees and receives no local taxes. The Landfill also receives grant funding to support special, free collection events such as for electronics or tire recycling.

Members of the Hastings City Council approved on May 22, the purchase of a new landfill compactor for \$795,000. The existing compactor has 8,600 hours of service. The major component warranty ended after 7,500 hours. The remaining maintenance warranty will end after 10,000 hours, in September. Landfill compaction is extremely hard on the equipment. It is essential for the Landfill to maintain an operable compactor. Some landfills will maintain a spare landfill compactor to allow for maintenance and repair of the primary compactor. The operational requirements of the Hastings Landfill does not warrant a second compactor. By timely replacing the landfill compactor the trade-in value and warranty has provided a consistent and reliable service.

The Landfill is open to the public weekdays 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., and Saturdays 8 a.m. to noon. Landfill staff members want to remind the public those hours of operation mean patrons must leave the facility by 4:45 p.m., or noon on Saturdays. This is because staff members must cover the current working face with the alternate daily cover at

closing to ensure the trash that was compacted during the day is maintained and covered along with finishing appropriate closing duties. The sixth cell is the final cell available at this landfill. Once the cell reaches ground level, solid waste will continue to be compacted to a height above ground level per the permit issued from the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy. The landfill is expected to reach capacity in about 23 years based on current activity levels.



Top photo: back row (L-R) Joe Dixon, Darian Archer, Corby Kennedy, Konner Hinrichs. Front row (L-R): Michelle Hill, Julie Brown, Jacob Hoagland. Bottom photo: Lisa Davis and Ben Hartmann. Not pictured Administrative Assistant Janet Johnson.



# STREETS

## Last Month's Accomplishments

- ◆ Continued street sweeping, mowing, **painting**, concrete replacement and asphalt work
- ◆ Completed 2 street openings for plumbers this month
- ◆ Set up barricades and fencing for 2 events
- ◆ **Patched potholes in Parkview Cemetery prior to Memorial Day services.**

## Upcoming Projects

- ◆ Continued maintenance activities

## Reminder of the Month

- ◆ The summer months are filled with construction activities. When you see a construction zone, slow down and watch for workers and moving equipment.





# DEVELOPMENT SERVICES Pg 11

Chad Bunger started June 5 as the Development Services Director for the City of Hastings.

Bunger had served as director of community and economic development for the town of Bennett, Colorado since July 2022.



Bunger previously spent 15 years with the city of Manhattan, Kansas — first for 6 ½ years as a planner, then for four years as a senior planner, and eventually for 5 ½ years as assistant director of community development.

Bunger grew up in Hildreth and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in exercise science from the University of Nebraska at Kearney in May 2001. He received his master's degree in regional and community planning from Kansas State University in May 2008.

Lee Vrooman, Director of Engineering for the City of Hastings, announced the hiring of Chad Bunger during the Hastings Planning Commission work session on Tuesday, May 16. Vrooman was the Interim Director of Development Services. The Director of Development Services reports to the Director of Engineering.

The Development Services Director position has been vacant since August 2022 when Lisa Parnell-Rowe resigned to become city administrator in Buena Vista, Colorado. Vrooman

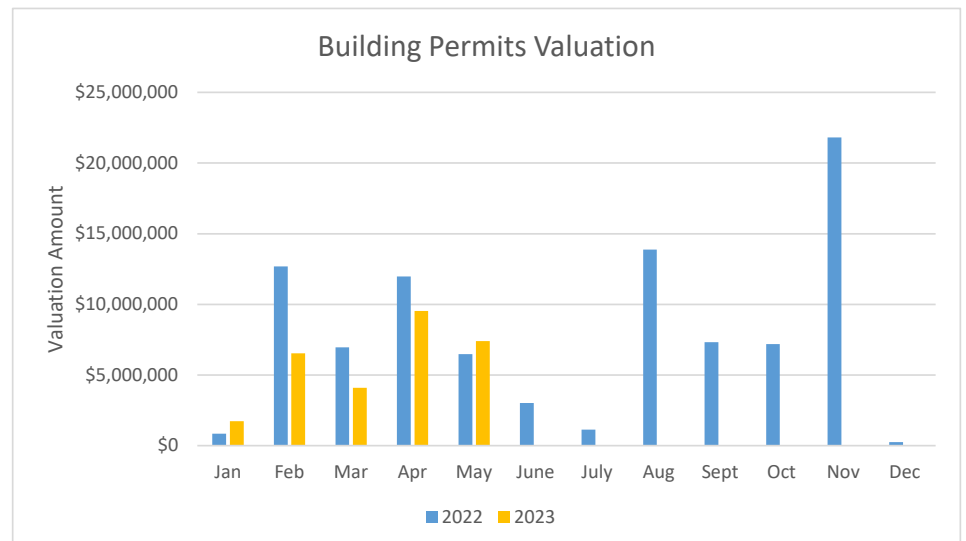
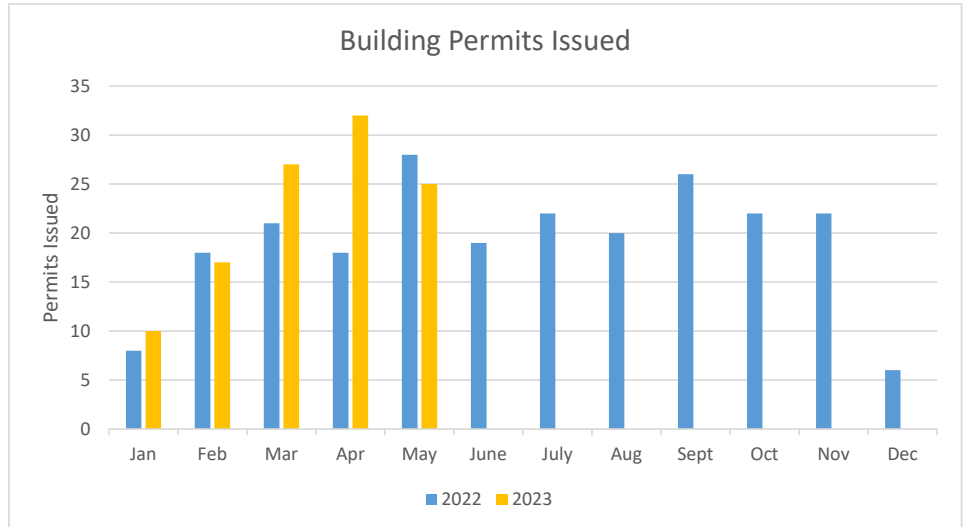
has filled the role on an interim basis since then.

Vrooman said a large panel, including a couple Planning Commission members, inter-

viewed Bunger.

"We thought he was very genuine and would be a good fit for the City of Hastings," Vrooman said.

"We're excited to have him."



	2022 Building/Issued			2023 Building/Issued		
	#	Fees	Valuation	#	Fees	Valuation
Jan	8	\$3,383.02	\$848,511.39	10	\$5,031.22	\$1,727,725.45
Feb	18	\$38,990.16	\$12,695,252.37	17	\$37,527.15	\$6,529,893.63
Mar	21	\$39,452.12	\$6,967,169.38	27	\$20,975.95	\$4,087,070.48
Apr	18	\$64,999.64	\$11,971,253.98	32	\$46,834.09	\$9,538,579.40
May	28	\$26,147.87	\$6,469,413.89	25	\$38,451.79	\$7,396,432.51
June	19	\$6,065.39	\$3,019,405.84			
July	22	\$3,297.34	\$1,135,204.23			
Aug	20	\$71,591.74	\$13,886,283.85			
Sept	26	\$18,156.28	\$7,331,063.51			
Oct	22	\$12,569.51	\$7,191,729.96			
Nov	22	\$120,656.47	\$218,096,52.42			
Dec	6	\$1,302.57	\$246,370.47			
Total	230	\$ 406,612.11	\$ 93,571,311.29	111	\$ 148,820.20	\$ 29,279,701.47

## CITY OF HASTINGS BUDGET

The City of Hastings budget document is prepared by city staff and approved by the mayor and city council. The annual budget is the mechanism by which the city establishes the program of service and priorities for the next fiscal year. The City of Hastings budget meets all of the requirements set forth by the State of Nebraska Budget Act.

## BUDGET PROCESS

The City's fiscal year is Oct. 1 to Sept. 30. The budget process takes five to six months to complete from start to finish. The process starts in April with a timeline prepared to outline key dates and deadlines. The budget is comprised of several phases.

1. Departments prepare operating and capital budget requests in April and May – department heads spend time preparing their future budget requests based on project or capital needs and prior year operating actual expenses.

2. Management holds meetings with department directors and finance staff in June – Priority capital items and significant changes to operating requests are discussed and reviewed.

3. Management and the finance department prepare the proposed budget document in July to present to City Council that includes utility rates and tax levy for the next fiscal year.

4. The Utility Advisory Board reviews the proposed utility budget at the August regular meeting and provides feedback and a recommendation to City Council for approval. City council holds a work session in August to discuss the proposed budget and discuss any changes or corrections.

5. A proposed budget document is finalized and presented to council for approval in September.

6. The City Council holds a public hearing to provide the public an opportunity for input in early September.

7. The budget is approved by City Council and the adopted budget is submitted to the county and the state auditor's office by Sept. 30.

8. The budget is implemented and evaluated



throughout the fiscal year for which the budget was created.

9. The finance department monitors expenditures and keeps departments aware of their budget status over the course of the fiscal year.

10. After the end of the fiscal year an independent auditor reviews the financial position of the city and ensures the budget complies with the annual financial report and follows accepted accounting principles.



- 

☐ Put backhoe attachment in travel position  
☐ Raised stabilizers and secured.  
☐ Checked for vehicle slow moving emblem  
☐ Locked brake pedals together  
☐ Maintained loader bucket height  
☐ Maintained safe road speed  
☐ Used accelerator pedal, not hand throttle  
☐ Used flashing lights and rotating beacon  
☐ Wore seat belt

Comments:

- Reared the backhoe for backfilling.  
 Maintained loader bucket position  
 Loaded bucket  
 Carried load to fill area  
 Pushed fill material into fill area  
 Dumped load into excavation  
 Used proper gear and speed  
 Wore seat belt  
 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A group of approximately ten people are seated around a large, U-shaped wooden conference table in a meeting room. They are attending a 'Near Miss Training' session. In the background, a large projection screen displays the Hastings Nebraska logo and the text 'Near Miss Training Safety Committee Meeting 2/15/2023'. The participants, including men and women, are dressed in casual business attire, with some wearing high-visibility vests. They are seated in tan leather chairs, and the table is cluttered with papers, pens, and personal items like water bottles and sunglasses. The room has a professional yet relaxed atmosphere.

# PARKS AND RECREATION



The third-annual Hastings Pickleball Tournament was held June 3 at Carter Park with the winners crowned before rain.



The 8 and under Bronco softball camp took place at the end of May and beginning of June.



The three tennis courts at Hastings Utilities were resurfaced by Tennis Courts Unlimited out of Nebraska City. These courts get resurfaced every 10 years. The total cost was \$27,300.

## Upcoming Recreation Programs

- ◆ Youth Tennis League, June 27
- ◆ Slow Pitch Softball All-Star Game, June 29 including home run derby, at the Smith Softball Complex.
- ◆ 4th of July Concert & Fireworks Show – Luke Mills Band
- ◆ Fly In Cinema, July 7 at dusk Showing Top Gun at Hastings Municipal Airport.



Junior lifeguards learn about water safety at the Hastings Aquacourt Waterpark.



The second-annual tennis open house was held May 31 at the Hastings High School tennis courts. The event helped promote Quick Start Tennis Lessons with 5-8 and 9-14 age groups, as well as a Youth Tennis League beginning June 27. The Celebrate Recovery barbecue team grilled hamburgers and hot dogs.



In May, the Fixed Base Operator sold 13,000 gallons of Jet fuel and 2,770 gallons of 100 LL. They hired another new Certified Flight Instructor to help with demand for lessons. They have 10 students currently and several that have almost achieved their Private License and two currently working on their Instrument Rating.

The hangers are fully rented with around 40 planes based at the airport. The Mechanic (J&S Aviation) is very busy and has several planes that they are working on and a waiting list for avionics installations.

The Antique Airplane Association had a very successful burger feed the last Saturday in May with around 20 planes flying in and several people from the community that came out to look at the planes and enjoy a burger.

Several pilots and members of our EAA and Hastings Airport Association volunteered at the State Fly in and Airshow in Grand Island.

We completed a new off-airport parking lot for J&S Aviation. Several of our buildings are getting a facelift and we are resealing the roofs so they don't leak. We also completed replacing some broken up concrete in the Historic Brick Hanger. You will see a lot more painting of buildings and general cleaning up at the airport in June. The terminal building is coming along well and is getting a makeover also. We want to make sure and maintain our buildings since they are all rented out and being used.

We hosted the Air Race Classic on June 20 and 21. Forty-two teams including 101 women pilots, with 18 universities represented, raced across the United States. Hastings was a stop for them to refuel and rest.

<https://www.airraceclassic.org>





# ENGINEERING

## Last Month's Accomplishments

- ◆ 4.16KV to 13.8KV electric distribution conversion work, 2nd to 7th Street and Briggs to Bellevue Avenue started.
- ◆ Solar Farm Phase II project kickoff meeting.
- ◆ Bottom ash and fly ash projects for WEC 1 kickoff
- ◆ Received bids on Coal Transfer Tower electrical work and material bids for Heartwell Renewable electrical feeders
- ◆ Issued Auxiliary Boiler bid package for WEC2

## Upcoming Projects

- ◆ Quiet Crossing construction to start on Hastings Avenue
- ◆ Receiving bids for construction of three large substation projects
- ◆ Developing capital budgets for 23/24 fiscal year
- ◆ Continuing construction of water main replacement and street improvement projects

## Engineering Fact of the Month

- ◆ The City's natural gas system has 191 miles of gas main (140 miles of steel main and 51 miles of HDPE main), 9,594 total services (6,427 steel services and 3,167 plastic services), 2 town border stations, 27 regulator stations, and 10,960 meters.





# HUMAN RESOURCES

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The month of May was very busy for the Human Resources department, as we facilitated the hiring of approximately 150 seasonal employees.

The City of Hastings couldn't survive the summer without these individuals. These employees play an important part in keeping things running smoothly, in roles such as lifeguard, facility attendant, and concession workers at the Aquacourt. We also hire seasonal employees to help with mowing throughout the City, and to help in the street department. In order for employees to receive a paycheck, it takes several steps and a lot of paperwork that must be completed before they begin working. This helps to ensure we are meeting compliance requirements, as well as keeping the employees safe. That's where



Clockwise, starting at bottom left: Matt Schreiber (HFR), Bryce Bottolfson (HFR), Paul Clement (HFR), Sheila Thompson (HR), Trent Clark (Safety), Rachel Hefta (HFR), Seth Webster (Parks and Rec), and Chad Bunger (Development Services) go over new hire information in onboarding on June 5.

we come in! All of this requires a lot of coordination, communication, organization and commitment, and we are proud to facilitate this process for the City of Hastings.

In addition to all of the seasonal employees, we also posted eight regular positions, conducted 38 interviews, and hired/on-boarded nine new employees.

# CITY ATTORNEY

## Last months accomplishments:

- ◆ Filed 12 new complaints regarding, property, parking, and animal code violations.
- ◆ Prosecuted 29 violations of City Code.
- ◆ Drafted and reviewed contracts as requested by departments.

## Upcoming Projects:

- ◆ Review of City Code through the Municode online program.
- ◆ Continued implementation of abatement processes.
- ◆ Review of city code updates as requested by departments



continued support of code

enforcement officers.

# HASTINGS UTILITIES

## Electric Distribution

The electric distribution department includes one director of substations and distribution, one superintendent of distribution, three crew leaders and 11 linemen total: six journeymen and five apprentice.

Each crew leader normally has three linemen. There is a journeyman lineman in charge of the service truck with another lineman to assist when needed during regular working hours.

Every crew leader and lineman are in the after-hours call rotation. Each person is on call for a week from Monday to Sunday. Right now, they are on call once every 12 weeks, when our new linemen are eligible to be on the list that number will jump to 14 weeks. They respond to after-hours calls.

The service personnel respond to calls during normal working hours: 8 a.m. to noon and 1-5 p.m.

Challenges faced by linemen include working in inclement weather, which is more challenging at night.

It is tough being on call during weekends and holidays.

The public can make things easier for linemen by relaying information to Hastings Utilities about outages or problems they see, such as lines down or sparking wires. Stay clear of crews working on electric lines.

When it comes to electric lines, the public should stay away from any down lines and

contact Hastings Utilities immediately.

Crews from Looks Great Services, a contractor from Columbia, Mississippi began tree-trimming efforts in Hastings in May.

There are two areas to be addressed in this project, one in east Hastings and one in west Hastings.

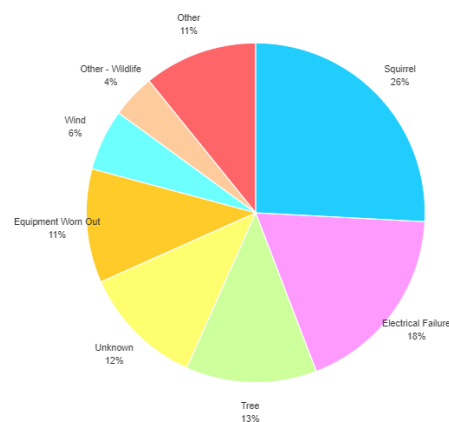
Tree trimming is one of the most important preventative maintenance jobs in electric distribution

Looks Great Services is continuing work the city initiated in 2020 with a previous contractor to trim back trees away utility lines. The neighborhoods included in these two areas were not addressed in the previous project.

There have been fewer outages due to branches on lines during high winds following the tree trimming efforts from the 2020-2021 contract.



## Electric outage causes in 2022



Outage Cause	Count	View
Squirrel	31	<a href="#">View</a>
Electrical Failure	22	<a href="#">View</a>
Tree	15	<a href="#">View</a>
Unknown	14	<a href="#">View</a>
Equipment Worn Out	13	<a href="#">View</a>
Wind	7	<a href="#">View</a>
Other - Wildlife	5	<a href="#">View</a>
Storm	3	<a href="#">View</a>
Equipment Damage	3	<a href="#">View</a>
Vehicle Accident	2	<a href="#">View</a>
Bird	2	<a href="#">View</a>
Contact with Foreign Object	1	<a href="#">View</a>
Equipment	1	<a href="#">View</a>
Utility Maintenance and Repairs	1	<a href="#">View</a>
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	



# HASTINGS UTILITIES

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## Solar

The Hastings City Council voted 6-2 on April 24 to approve a contract with GenPro Energy Solutions for the Hastings Solar Farm Phase 2 in the amount of \$8,413,259.

Hastings Solar Farm Phase 2 will add 4.63 MW to the existing 1.5 MW farm west of the Hastings Municipal Airport.

Construction is scheduled to start in December 2023 with a projected completion date of May 1, 2024.

The federal Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law Aug. 16, 2022. It included provisions for municipalities to receive at least a 30% direct refund with the potential for more.

The city will receive the refund after construction is complete.

Even without the incentive, solar's price point competes very well at the moment with other forms of generation. Its downside is the inability to control when it generates.

Fossil fuel generation is greatly impacted by the cost of fuel. Last year, the average cost to generate with coal was about \$38/MWh after the capital cost has been paid, while the average cost to generate electricity with natural gas was over \$500/MWh. After the capital cost of the solar farm has been paid, the average cost to generate with solar is about \$3/MWh.

Each generation asset the city owns is evaluated independently of each other. There are efficiencies to having multiple assets, as it allows us to spread our fixed costs out more.

Phase 1 is sold out and there



are three large customers looking for a renewable option that Phase 2 would supply. GenPro was the contractor on Phase 1.

Of the contract amount, \$2,007,386 will be spent this fiscal year and the remaining amount budgeted in the 2023/24 fiscal year. There is room in the budget because of delayed deliveries of transformers and equipment.

The rebates will most likely come back to the City of Hastings in fiscal year 2023-24 or 2024-25. Customer investment will be priced similar to Phase 1 of the solar project. Through Phase 1, the city looked at multiple locations and talked to the Federal Aviation Administration. Airports are a great location for solar farms because other buildings cannot be built in those areas.

Phase 1 included nearly 3,000 330-watt panels and more than

3,000 335-watt panels totaling about 2 million watts or 2 MW DC generation.

According to the DC to AC conversion ratio, there would be 1.5 MW output.

Electricity generated by Hastings Utilities units is sold back to the market and all of Hastings' power is purchased from the market, so local generation has little impact on the ability to cover city load. The solar farm is unable to generate 24 hours a day because there is not sun exposure 24 hours a day; but on average with total generation numbers regardless of generation time, over 300 homes could be powered with the generation from Phase 1.

Phase 2 is planned for 10,275 545-watt panels totaling about 5.6 million watts or 5.6 MW DC generation. According to the DC to AC conversion ratio, there would be 4.63 MW AC output.

# PUBLIC INFORMATION

The City Hall building at 220 N. Hastings Ave. is now closed to the public.

The Development Services Department moved June 19-21 into the administration side of the city-owned building at 3505 Yost Ave.

The Administration and Finance departments previously relocated to the Landmark Center at Suites No. 422 and 424 in the southeast corner of the Landmark Center at 2727 W. Second St.

Meetings of the Hastings City Council and other city boards will meet in the second floor conference room at the Hastings Public Library at 314 N. Denver Ave., until temporary Hastings City Council chambers in the Hastings Municipal Airport terminal building at 3300 W. 12th St., are established.

The City of Hastings entered into an agreement April 6 with the Hastings Building Company for 3,617 square feet, between the two suites for use as business offices for two years.

The city will pay \$48,840 each year in monthly installments of \$4,070.

At the conclusion of the 2-year lease, the city has the option to extend the lease for one year at a rate of \$51,300 payable in monthly installments. Should the city not elect to extend the lease for one year, the lease will become month-to-month at a rate of \$4,275 per month.

Funds for the temporary relocation are included in the city budget.

The City is evaluating renovation and repair options for the existing City Hall at 220 N. Hastings Ave., as well as a new-build option. A survey conducted in March, showed support from the public, as well as city employees, for keeping City Hall in downtown Hastings.

The City is working with CMBA Architects of Grand Island for design work.

City Administrator Shawn Metcalf expedited the move due to environmental concerns after mold was found growing out of an unused office in the building.

Rented space is needed because the city does not have extra temporary space for the 16 employees combined in the Administration and



The city's Administration and Finance departments recently moved to suites No. 422 and 424 in the southeast corner of the Landmark Center at 2727 W. Second St.



The city's Development Services Department recently moved into the city-owned building at 3505 Yost Ave.

Finance departments.

A committee of city employees looked at multiple options for temporary office space. The Landmark Center was determined to be the best option when weighing cost as well as existing technology infrastructure.

A sale featuring surplus items from the building at 220 N. Hastings Ave., will take place later this summer.