

The Ellsworth City Council met in regular session at 6:03 p.m. at City Hall on May 27th, 2025 with Mayor Yager presiding, and the following council present: Sogard, Funk and Olson. With Phipps arriving at 6:12pm. Also in attendance were Ashley Platte with ECA, Andrew Holden, Laura Larson SMK Insurance, Bobby Shomo SMK Insurance, Brian Zimmerman, EJS Officer Kaleb Morton.

	May Receipts	May Disbursements
General Fund	50,380.07	20,813.35
Road Use Fund	0.00	10,849.16
Employee Benefit Fund	2,797.40	375.98
Emergency Fund	0.00	
Local Option Sales Tax Fund	0.00	
Tax Increment Finance Area 1	0.00	
Tax Increment Finance 1 Amend	2,025.12	
Bingo Fund	3,959.00	7251.75
Debt Service Fund	1,520.78	0.00
Capital Project-Strm Water		
Capital Project-Water Tower		14,845.00
Water Fund	24,486.38	57,983.14
Water Sinking Fund		
Sewer Fund	7,545.62	5,937.57
Electric Fund	44,984.59	122,559.88
Electric Sinking Fund		
Storm Water Fund	3,121.18	64.10
Storm Water Sinking		
	\$140,820.14	\$240,679.93

AGENDA APPROVAL: Motion by Sogard, seconded by Olson to approve the agenda. Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by Funk, seconded by Olson to approve the following items listed on the consent agenda:

- a. Motion to approve May 12th, 2025 council minutes.
- b. Motion to approve May payment of claims.

Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried and claims hereby made a portion of these minutes.

PUBLIC FORUM: None Present

SMK INSURANCE: Laura Larson with SMK Insurance and owner Bobby Shomo were present to update Council on current city coverage and to answer any questions Council may have. They informed Council that wind/hail coverage is more than likely something that will continue to have a separate policy and deductible. Currently through EMC Ellsworth is at a rate of 1% total value deductible. On a building like the newer Water Plant, should a catastrophic weather event occur the deductible would be \$38,000. They presented the City with two dollar amount options for deductible buy down coverage. The \$10,000 deductible coverage would be an additional \$5,099.59 per year and the \$5,000 deductible coverage would be an additional \$5,810.19 per year. After Q&A by Council, Motion made by Sogard and seconded by Funk to purchase the \$5,000 deductible buy down policy. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.

NEW BINGO EMPLOYEE: Bingo lost their third employee in December, and Allen Watts had requested hiring a replacement. Clerk Eckers has the paperwork in hand, including application from Marvin Nelson. Motion by Funk and seconded by Phipps to approve the hire of Marvin Nelson at minimum wage. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.

FY26 EJS 28E AGREEMENT: Council had a short discussion about the need for a vote. It was determined, as the current 28E agreement had never received a vote by Council to discontinue participation, the Council will continue to be committed to the current 28E agreement, which will renew after June of 2026.

FY 26 PER CAPITA RATE INCREASE, HAMILTON COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT: Tabled until the proposed increase can be discussed at the next EJS Police Board meeting. Mayor Yager will extend an invitation to Sheriff Pruismann to the next City Council meeting to answer Council questions.

DEVELOPERS AGREEMENT PARCEL 40872436226006: Updated Developer's Agreement included removing the proposed widening of the intersection at Ubben and Hwy 175 and adding developer responsibility for vacating and moving sewer line. Motion by Funk and seconded by Phipps to approve the new draft of the Developers Agreement. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried. Clerk Eckers will re-draft a signature page and send to the developer.

ECA: Ashely Platte was present to update the Council on the progress for fundraising and improvements to the concession stand at the Ball Field Park. Platte will bring quote from Thompson Construction to Clerk Eckers this week. ECA is running a 50/50 raffle at Saturday evening Bingo at the Community Center, the first week they raised \$52 off of \$1 ticket sales. Motion by Sogard to approve starting of the rehab project to the concession stand. Second by Funk. Roll call votes 3-0 with Olson abstaining. Motion carried.

Ms Platte also updated the Council on the date decided on for the 2026 Ellsworth Extravaganza, which is proposed for June 27. The ECA requested use of the City Park and Park Shelter house for the day. Motion by Sogard and second by Funk to allow ECA access to the City Park and buildings at no charge for the Ellsworth Extravaganza celebration on June 27, 2026. Roll call votes 3-0 with Olson abstaining. Motion carried.

NEW CITY ATTORNEY: Discussion was had that the city is in need of a new city attorney. Clerk Eckers will identify potential local attorneys and draft a letter of intent to send out.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESIGNATION: Councilman Laube submitted his resignation letter effective 05-19-25. Clerk Eckers published open application period, with interviews to be held June 24th. Clerk Eckers will call previous applicants as well to see if they are still interested in filling the vacancy. Motion to accept resignation by Olson and seconded by Sogard. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS UPDATES:

FY25/26 purchase or lease of a new backhoe – a lease from Murphey Tractor was presented to Council for 5 year lease to own of a John Deere 2025 310 P Backhoe for a price of \$126, 587.00 with a fixed interest rate of 4.59%. Annual payments with interest included would be \$26, 479.47. Supervisor Vanlangen called Chris Nelson with Murphey Tractor during the discussion to answer questions the Council had. Motion by Funk and seconded by Phipps to lease the new backhoe from Murphey Tractor with downpayment and/or annual payments to be determined at a later council meeting pending questions about how the interest rate will accrue and be paid out. Roll call votes 3-1 with Sogard voting Nay. Clerk Eckers will follow up with Chris from Murphey Tractor concerning questions on interest rate and a purchase agreement.

Supervisor Vanlangen approved a building permit at 438 Park Ave Circle. Council was updated on the project.

CITY HALL UPDATES: Clerk Eckers updated Council on the status of several projects including a developers agreement for a potential buyer for the fish farm, updating the water ordinance with new rates which will factor into financing on the new water tower, the new water tower project status, amending the urban renewal plan to include a few properties seeing development so that the city can leverage TIF for the infrastructure costs.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Yager adjourned the meeting at 7:47 pm.

/s/ Dolorus Yager, Mayor

/s/ Heidi Eckers, City Clerk