

Mayor: Edna J. Barnes

Recorder-Treasurer: Willow R. Sharp

Council Members: Tony Berry, Amy Clay-Thomas, Natalie Quintana-DuBois, Ginni Kauffman, Sue Taylor, Laura Smith

City Attorney:

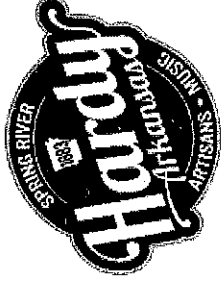
City of Hardy, Arkansas

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**Hardy City Council
Regular Business Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2025**

The Old Hardy Gym - 203 School Street Hardy, Arkansas 72542

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Mayor Ethan J. Barnes. Mayor Barnes led all in the Pledge of Allegiance. The invocation was offered by Councilmember Dr. Tony Berry. Recorder-Treasurer Willow R. Sharp called the council roll: Berry, Clay-Thomas, Kauffman, Quintana-DuBois, Taylor, Smith. Mayor Barnes and R-T Sharp were present. All six council members were present; City Attorney M. Joseph Grider was not in attendance. Quorum was established.

Minutes from the April 30, 2025, Special Business Meeting were presented for approval. A motion was made by Councilmember Smith and seconded by Councilmember Taylor to approve the minutes from the April 30, 2025, Special Business Meeting. Mayor Barnes called for a voice vote—all were in favor and the motion to approve the minutes passed.

Minutes from the May 12, 2025, Regular Business Meeting were presented for approval. A question arose from Councilmember Kauffman regarding the Hardy Volunteer Fire Department tanker truck and recently borrowed loan amounts. Clarification was provided regarding the tanker truck and promissory notes. A motion was made by Councilmember Taylor and seconded by Councilmember Berry to approve the minutes from the May 12, 2025, Regular Business Meeting. Mayor Barnes called for a voice vote—all were in favor and the motion to approve the minutes passed.

Mayor Barnes presented the agenda for the evening's meeting. Councilmember Taylor made a motion to amend the agenda to add Nancy Evans to the agenda. Councilmember Quintana-DuBois seconded the motion to amend the agenda. Mayor called for a voice vote—all were in favor and the motion to amend the agenda passed.

Councilmember Quintana-DuBois made a motion to amend the agenda to discuss two proposed resolutions regarding financial oversight. Councilmember Kauffman seconded the motion to amend the agenda with the two additional resolutions. Mayor called for a voice vote—all were in favor and the motion to amend the agenda passed.

A motion was made to approve the amended agenda by Councilmember Berry. Councilmember Clay-Thomas seconded the motion to approve the amended agenda. Mayor called for a voice vote—all were in favor and the motion to approve the amended agenda passed.

Filed 8/12/25 VB 1870
City of Hardy, Arkansas
Recorder-Treasurer Office

Reports:

City Financials: R-T Sharp reported sales tax revenues were up. A Budget Work Session will be held on Wednesday, July 16, at 6:00 p.m. at the Old Hardy Gym. R-T Sharp reported that the City's annual deposit rates would be discussed later in the meeting as listed on the agenda under new business. There was a question from Councilmember Quintana-DuBois inquiring about the cash balances in each city fund. R-T Sharp did not have those amounts readily available at the time of the question. Councilmember Quintana-DuBois requested monthly bank statements and credit card statements be placed in the monthly Councilmember packet folders. R-T Sharp offered that request would not be a problem and that the information being requested would be available at the Budget Work Session in the following two (2) days on July 16, 2025.

Fire Department: Captain Jason Creasey reported that the Hardy Volunteer Fire Department had 34 calls in the month of June 2025, bringing the total calls for service to 213 thru the end of June.

Police Department: Interim Police Chief Michael Himschoot reported on a few various calls. He reported a commercial breaking and entering incident on Cope Avenue that was under investigation with the assistance from the Sharp County Sheriff's Office. Interim Chief Himschoot provided that one (1) arrest had been made and a second arrest was pending.

Public Works Department: Superintendent Steve Morris reported that the Public Works Department had many work orders started and many more to complete. Supt. Morris provided that Hardy Water Works had repaired six (6) water-line leaks. Supt. Morris addressed that the Public Works Department was understaffed. Supt. Morris expressed his frustration as a Department Head in the City with the large workload and lack of manpower to keep-up with the ever-growing demand of maintenance and operations. The Council wished to explore additional help for the department.

Planning and Zoning Commission: Mayor reported that the P & Z Commission met earlier in the evening and approved one (1) application request for a building permit.

Sharp County Regional Airport Commission: Mayor reported the commission met on June 4, 2025, and was waiting on parts to repair a fuel pump. Mayor reported that the fire extinguishers were serviced, and that some runway lights were replaced.

Tri-County Solid Waste Disposal Authority: Mayor reported that the authority had a monthly ending balance of \$16,908.50 and that they are still looking for an affordable replacement for the box truck to conduct recycle material pick-ups.

Hardy Advertising and Promotion Commission (HAPC): Commissioner Kauffman reported that the commission had decided to terminate the contract with the Jackson Family for the current signage that is displayed on U.S. HWY 63 coming in from Jonesboro. It was also reported that local business owner Ralph Lowe of the Spring River Collective has started a marketing campaign called "It's Happening in Hardy" to promote local music, artist, and performers. The

HAPC established an expense in their budget of \$2,000 for digital marketing and that Hardy had been selected as the best weekend getaway location by the *NEA Premiere Magazine*.

Mayor's Report: The Mayor reported that the July 4th holiday was a successful and safe time in Hardy. He also reported that the Hardy Campground and RV Park produced almost \$2,800.00 in revenue during June 2025 and that the Dr. Thompson Park Public Restroom renovations were nearing completion. Mayor Barnes also reported that he met with FEMA and discussed the reimbursement process for the flooding of the Spring River from April of 2025. He explained that the City would have to expend 100% of the cost of the projects, and that FEMA would reimburse the City for 75% of the cost on the projects, resulting in the local cost portion of 25%.

Old Business:

Citizen Request: Nimmi Desai inquired to the council regarding the Mayor and whether any action would be taken due to the removal of James Road from the list of roads that were to be resurfaced with the State Street Aid program. Ms. Desai referenced the loudspeaker system issues, the inability to clearly hear, and the need to meet public meeting expectations. Ms. Desai discussed a FOIA request for a signed copy of the City Attorney's contract. Ms. Desai discussed A & P Commission appointments, A & P Commission vacancies, transparency, and support for the HAPC.

New Business:

Proposed Ordinance 2025-06 Implementation of Operation Hours in Parks was the first item under new business. Council discussed the proposed ordinance. Mayor offered that Sections five (5) and six (6) were added to the proposed ordinance regarding fees for certain uses pertaining to special events when additional services were needed. Council discussed setting the non-operation hours of 11:00 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. Park stay limitations were discussed regarding the Hardy Campground and RV Park, as well as allowing for a work-stay exception (up to six months with proof of a work contract). After a lengthy discussion, Councilmember Smith made a motion to table *Proposed Ordinance 2025-06*; Councilmember Kauffman seconded the motion to table. Mayor called for a voice vote; all were in favor of tabling the item for the following month, and the motion passed.

Mayor Barnes presented *Resolution 2025-10 FUN Park Grant Proposal Application* to the council. Mayor reported that the FUN Park Grant has a maximum award amount of up to \$100,000 and discussed the eligibility requirements for Hardy. Mayor Barnes opened the floor for a public forum at 7:48 p.m. to gather community feedback on how to best use the grant money if obtained. Citizen Elaine Brown offered that there was a certain company offering affordable deals on playground equipment; Downtown businessowner Ralph Lowe inquired about the consideration of using the funds at Buford Beach; Citizen and Councilmember Ginni Kauffman requested pickleball courts be added to Loberg Park. Mayor Barnes offered that many people from hours away utilize Loberg Park and that it is a staple in our community. Mayor asked if there were any more public comments regarding the FUN Park Grant Application. With no further comments, Mayor declared the public forum closed at 7:55 p.m. after thoughtful

discussion. Councilmember Taylor made a motion to read Resolution 2025-10—seconded by Councilmember Kauffman. Mayor called for a voice vote to read Resolution 2025-10; all were in favor, and the motion to read passed. Mayor read Resolution 2025-10. Councilmember Clay-Thomas made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-10—seconded by Councilmember Smith. Mayor called for voice vote; all were in favor and the motion to approve passed.

The next item under new business was *City Attorney*. Mayor Barnes presented the resignation letter of City Attorney M. Joseph Grider dated June 17, 2025. Mr. Grider's letter offered his final day of service to be July 18, 2025. Mayor Barnes thanked Mr. Grider for his service to the City of Hardy. Mayor Barnes provided that the City would post a legal advertisement notice regarding the need for a new City Attorney. Mayor Barnes asked for a motion to declare the City Attorney position vacant as of July 19, 2025, at 12:01 a.m. Councilmember Quintana-DuBois made a motion to declare the office of the City Attorney vacant as of July 19, 2025, at 12:01 a.m. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Taylor. Mayor Barnes called for a voice vote; all were in favor and the motion to declare the vacancy passed.

Mayor Barnes presented the next item on the agenda of *Annual Deposit Rates*. Mayor Barnes offered that FNBC Bank is the only bank remaining within the city limits of Hardy. Mayor Barnes and council discussed the community impact FNBC Bank offers the area, especially with the KAIT8 camera on the local television newscasts. It was discussed the community services provided, the charitable contributions given in the community, the volunteerism offered in the community, etc. Councilmember Taylor made a motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to continue a banking deposit relationship with FNBC Bank and to negotiate deposit account rates—Councilmember Smith seconded the motion to remain with FNBC Bank. Mayor Barnes called for a roll-call vote: Berry-yes; Clay-Thomas-yes; Kauffman-yes; Quintana-DuBois-yes; Smith-yes; Taylor-Yes. All were in favor and the motion passed to remain with FNBC Bank.

Regarding *FEMA Projects: 75% Reimbursement Process & Funding*: Mayor Barnes discussed a matured certificate of deposit with FNBC Bank of approximately \$110,000 that was placed in a deposit holding account. Mayor requested the council's blessing to use some of the funds to pay flood related bills from the April 2025 flooding event. Mayor Barnes explained that the funds would be reimbursed for 75% of the projects from FEMA. This request was to be discussed at the Budget Work Session following on July 16, 2025.

Councilmember Kauffman presented *Approval of A & P Com. Appts- As Rec by the A & P Commission*. Councilmember Kauffman reported that Mr. Lopez had withdrawn his name for consideration to the HAPC, but that Jason Jackson was being re-recommended for approval to the HAPC. A motion was made by Councilmember Kauffman to approve the appointment of Jason Jackson to the HAPC in the Lodging and Dining Position No. 3 seat that expires on September 1, 2028; Councilmember Sue Taylor seconded the motion for appointment of Jason Jackson. Mayor Barnes called for a roll-call vote. The vote was as follows: Berry-abstained; Clay-Thomas-yes; Kauffman-yes; Quintana-DuBois-yes; Smith-Yes; Taylor-yes. The vote count was five (5) yeas and one abstained. Mayor Barnes declared the appointment of Jason Jackson to the HAPC in the Lodging and Dining Position No. 3 seat that expires on September 1, 2028. (Mayor Barnes conducted the Oath of Office after the adjournment of the meeting).

The next item on the amended agenda was a citizen speaker request from Nancy Evans regarding James Road. Ms. Evans approached the Council and thanked the Council for adding her to the agenda. Ms. Evans presented a request for microphones for the department heads and speakers. Ms. Evans had a question regarding the number of Wards in Hardy and how many councilmembers were in each Ward. Mayor addressed the question that Hardy has three (3) Wards and two (2) positions per Ward. Ms. Evans also asked about the residency qualifications needed to run for public office and Mayor offered that it was based upon which address is stated on the candidacy documentation at the time of filing for public office. Ms. Evans asked for an update on James Road for possible re-paving. Supt. Morris raised his hand, and Mayor Barnes recognized him to speak. Supt. Morris addressed Ms. Evans explaining that James Rd is already paved and that the potholes had been repaired to the best of the city's ability with the amount of cold patch that was available at the time. Discussion arose regarding the State Street Aid Program and that the City would soon (in five-to-six-months) request another round of funding from the program.

The final item(s) for discussion under the amended new business was from Councilmember Quintana-DuBois. Councilmember Quintana-DuBois presented two resolutions for review and discussion to the council (the proper resolution numbers were later assigned for the business agenda in August of 2025 and are reflected herein), Resolution 2025-(14) and Resolution 2025-(15). Resolution 2025-(14) was a resolution requiring Council accessibility to all city financial account statements and supporting documentation. Councilmember Quintana-DuBois made a motion to read Resolution 2025-(14)—seconded by Councilmember Taylor. Mayor called for a voice vote; all were in favor and the motion to read passed. Mayor read Resolution 2025-(14). Discussion evolved regarding the documentation being requested to be added to the monthly packets such as credit card statements and bank balances/statements. Mayor Barnes asked for this resolution to be held for review until the following month. This resolution is slated for business in August of 2025.

Resolution 2025-(15) was a resolution requiring monthly financial summaries to be created for all city funds. R/T Sharp responded to the Council's request for financial documentation. Councilmember Kauffman made a motion to read Resolution 2025-(15) A Resolution Requiring Monthly Financial Summaries for All City Funds—seconded by Councilmember Taylor. Mayor called for a voice vote; all were in favor and the motion to read the resolution passed. Mayor read Resolution No. 2025-(15). Mayor Barnes asked for this resolution to be held for review until the following month. This resolution is slated for business in August of 2025.

Citizen Commentary:

Jason Jackson: Mr. Jackson addressed the council regarding the budget as it pertained to tax revenues collected, the Fire Department expenditures, the Police Department expenditures, the Sharp County Regional Airport Authority service fees, and flood insurance/claims. Mr. Jackson was encouraged to attend the Budget Work Session scheduled for July 16, 2025.

Adjournment:

Councilmember Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Taylor seconded the motion to adjourn. With the motions on the floor, Councilmember Kauffman addressed the timing of receiving the Councilmember packets by the delivery deadline as set forth by *Resolution 2025-01*. It was discussed there was a technical issue with preparing the accurate final packet in time of the deadline. Mayor Barnes apologized on behalf of the administration, offering that the following month the administration would work better to produce the final accurate packet in a timelier fashion. The Mayor called for a voice vote to the motion laid on the floor to adjourn; all were in favor and the motion to adjourn passed. The meeting was declared adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

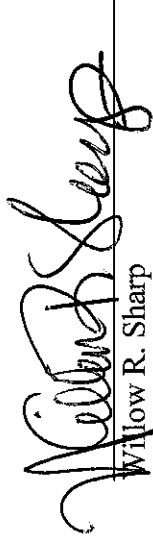
Willow R. Sharp
Recorder-Treasurer

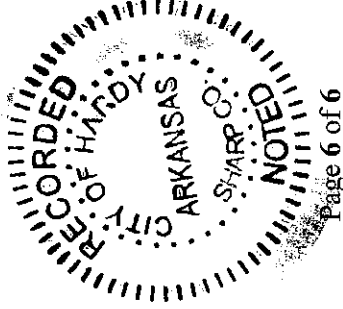
PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 14th DAY OF August, 2025.

APPROVED:


Ethan J. Barnes, Mayor

ATTEST:


Willow R. Sharp
Recorder-Treasurer



Filed 8/12/25 W.R. Little
City of Hardy, Arkansas
Recorder-Treasurer Office