HAZEN CITY COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

October 28, 2026
Hazen City Hall

Present: President Schiferl, Commissioner Haack, Commissioner Haack, Commissioner Stern, and Commissioner Wiedrich.
Others Present: Attorney Kaffar, Sgt. Anthony Melberg, Editor Arens, Auditor Erhardt and residents of the City of Hazen/Mercer County.
President Schiferl called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.
President Schiferl led the pledge of allegiance.
Hearing – Appeal of Disciplinary Action – Sgt. A. Melberg: President Schiferl began the meeting by reading a prepared statement about wanting the Hazen Police Department to continue and thrive by through training and assistance of the Mercer County Sheriff's Department. Commissioner Folkerts also read from a prepared statement about wanting a functioning, well rounded police department with a schedule that allows time off and training time for officers. No comments/statements were provided by Commissioners Haack, Stern or Wiedrich. President Schiferl advised those present for the meeting that public comments would not be taken as it is not required outside of a regular meeting.
Sgt. Anthony Melberg began his comments by addressing the difference between the adopted employee policy manual and the adopted police procedures as to duties of the chief of police relating to scheduling, supervision, and other administrative matters of the department. Sgt. Melberg acknowledged discussion, at a meeting, with President Schiferl and Attorney Kaffar regarding scheduling concerns but, in his opinion, this was not a direct order to provide an updated schedule of shifts. Sgt. Melberg spoke as the employee policy regarding discipline and the varied levels of discipline and the fact that the proposed action commences at level three and the fact that he was not provided with a copy of the reprimand prior to the last meeting and the vote taken at that meeting. Sgt. Melberg commented on remarks at the last meeting being disparaging to his reputation and that he believes the image of the department is, and has, improved. President Schiferl and Commissioner Wiedrich commented on requested things not being completed and Sgt. Melberg addressed issues that arose from the fishing derby and the fact that he, and staff, are doing their best to resolve issues quickly. Attorney Kaffar commented that the discussion was moving beyond the scope of the appeal which related to a failure to provide an updated schedule as requested at the meeting with President Schiferl and the attorney. President Schiferl commented on that meeting stating that the directive to provide the schedule was a properly given directive. President Schiferl stated that it is not his intention to micro-manage the department and the schedule has still not been provided. Sgt. Melberg stated that another directive was to contact Sheriff Ternes for assistance, which has been done and that everyone needs to look at the totality of the situation and recent criminal activity, commenting that the chief of police is responsible for administrative duties as well as patrol and investigations. President Schiferl commented that the task requested is not complete as agreed as the schedule was to break up long stretches of shifts to allow for vacations and training. President Schiferl discussed the reason for the proposed disciplinary action as being 1) the fact that there was a clear directive; and 2) if the proposed disciplinary action is appropriate or is a lesser action available. Sgt. Melberg commented that he spoke to Sheriff Ternes about the contract, schedule and how to move forward, even discussing personal stuff and the conversation was very productive.
Attorney Kaffar indicated that the commission has authority to take action to dismiss the disciplinary action entirely or to move forward with disciplinary action, up to, the three (3) day suspension. Commissioner Haack moved to discard the suspension and move forward to provide assistance and guidance to Sgt. Melberg from the sheriff's department, Commissioner Wiedrich and President Schiferl. Commissioner Haack continued stating that he has served as a manager and that staff can present different situations to be addressed. The motion of Commissioner Haack, as read back, is to dismiss the proposed suspension and to proceed forward with guidance and assistance of the sheriff's department, Commissioner Wiedrich and President Schiferl. Sgt. Melberg commented on the lack of a policy regarding limits on overtime and asked the commission to look at both sides of the issue as things appear to be one-sided when viewing previous meeting videos. Commissioner Wiedrich seconded the motion. Upon discussion, Commissioner Stern commented that if the schedule was such a concern why it wasn't changed on day one and Commissioner Wiedrich indicated he did not want to micro-manage the department and the request for a schedule was to try and get help from outside agencies. Commissioner Stern also commented on the apparent poor management to put staff in such a situation and the fact that staff have stepped up to cover shifts for which the commission should be glad. Commissioner Wiedrich commented that he could not attend the meeting with President Schiferl, Attorney Kaffar and Sgt. Melberg but believes a clear directive was given to provide a schedule was given and still has not been complied with. Commissioner Wiedrich continued that a written reprimand may be more appropriate than suspension. Commissioner Folkerts was concerned that the schedule has still not been provided, even if it may be fluid and changing and stated that reprimand is appropriate because nothing has been produced on the request but that the suspension may be too much. Sgt. Melberg thanked

Commissioner Stern for the comments and added that the staff have stepped up and are responding to calls making every contact important and that incoming industry will make local conditions like conditions the current staff experienced in the oil field area around Williston. On roll call vote: Haack, "Aye", Wiedrich, "Nay", Folkerts, "Nay", Stern, "Aye". President Schiferl asked Attorney Kaffar about the effect of the motion being voted down and was advised that if the motion failed the commission would have to determine if other action is pursued or if the previously adopted action will take effect and when. President Schiferl voted "Nay", and after public interruption, the motion was declared to have failed. President Schiferl moved to issue a written reprimand to Sgt. Melberg and direct that President Schiferl and Commissioner Wiedrich shall provide necessary training and support to the department, to include assistance of the Mercer County Sheriff's Department, second by Commissioner Folkerts. Upon discussion, President Schiferl stated that he appreciates the support of the community and of the freedom to have meetings like this in our country. President Schiferl commented on providing tools and updating ordinances to assist the department moving forward. The motion to be voted on is: "to issue a written reprimand to Sgt. Melberg and direct that President Schiferl and Commissioner Wiedrich shall provide necessary training and support to the department, to include assistance of the Mercer County Sheriff's Department." On roll call vote: Schiferl, "Aye", Folkerts, "Aye", Haack, "Aye", Stern, "Nay", Wiedrich, "Aye", motion carried.

Sgt. Melberg about the law enforcement profession being unforgiving and the fact that officers don't often feel supported in their work and thanked the community for supporting the department and that everyone wants things to move forward in the right direction.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 PM CT. The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Monday, November 2, 2026, at 5:30 PM CT in the Commission Room of the Hazen City Hall.

Approved: Jesse Schiferl, President
Attest: Monte J. Erhardt, Auditor

(11-12-2026)