

**Enrolled Memorandum of the Meeting
Study Session/Meeting (Convened Electronically/Hybrid)
Twenty-Ninth Town Council of Highland
Monday, November 21, 2022**

The Twenty-Ninth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met in a study session on **Monday, November 21, 2022**, at 6:30 O'clock P.M., in the regular place, the Highland Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana.

*This meeting was convened as both an in person and an electronic meeting. Some persons were participating remotely on a Zoom platform that allowed for real time interaction between and among all of the Town Council and supported the public's ability to observe and record the proceedings. People were able to participate in person and remotely, allowing for all councilors to be simultaneously seen and heard. When the agenda item provided for public comment, this was supported as well. Councilor Toya Smith, Councilor Mark Schocke, Councilor Tom Black, Councilor Roger Sheeman, Councilor Zemen all participated in person.

The meeting was streamed live on the Town of Highland, Indiana Facebook page and participation was supported by the Zoom on-line communication platform.

Silent Roll Call: Councilors Bernie Zemen, Toya Smith, Mark Schocke, Tom Black, Roger Sheeman, were present in person as indicated. The Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak was present to memorialize the proceedings. *A quorum was attained.*

Officials Present: Pete Hojnicky, Metropolitan Police Chief, Ed Dabrowski, IT Director were in person.

General Substance of Matters Discussed.

Discussion: Meeting with the Highland Neighbors for Sustainability . Councilor Zemen asked that this be placed on the agenda.

The Highland Neighbors for Sustainability are asking the Council to create a Sustainability Commission. Communities that already that have a Sustainability Commissions are: South Bend; Bloomington; Richmond; Michigan City.

Those present for the Highland Neighbors for Sustainability were: Cathy Perrin; Carlos Aburto; Mary Hackett; Connie Wachala, Rory Kosioir and Donna Zemen.

Prior to the meeting Attorney Reed sent to the Council a 2nd revision of the proposed Sustainability Ordinance, establishing a Sustainability Commission. The balance of the centered around the contents of the Ordinance.

CREATING SEC [XYZ] IN CHAPTER [XYZ] OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND
MUNICIPAL CODE ESTABLISHING A COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY
AND A RESTRICTED, NON-REVERTING DONATION FUND

WHEREAS, managing our natural resources in a sustainable manner is essential for the health and well-being of all people and future generations; and

WHEREAS, nature and its biota of which we share the Earth not only hold an intrinsic value, but also contribute to our well-being, economy, culture, and way of life; and

WHEREAS, sustainable development benefits a town economically, socially, environmentally; and

WHEREAS, with assistance, businesses, community leaders, and neighbors can partner to improve the environmental quality of our community and to work together to create a clean, safe, and equitable place to live and work for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, sustainability involves collaboration with multiple agencies, town departments, commissions, and boards and thus, a Commission on Sustainability would serve to coordinate initiatives, educate the public, and get citizens involvedencourage citizen involvement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Town of Highland, Town Council that a Commission on Sustainability shall be established, and Section [XYZ] in the Town of Highland Code is created to read as follows

Sec. [XYZ] Commission on Sustainability

13. Establishment; Purpose and Intent

~~14.A~~ There is hereby established a Commission on Sustainability. The purpose of this Commission is to:

~~15.B~~ Review and analyze the policies relating to the environmental quality of the town, to act as an advisory commission to the Town Council and Council President in their efforts to oversee the protection and integrity of the natural environment, protect and preserve public and private treessgreen spaces, promote growth management and land use planning, minimize air, water, and land pollution, protect downstream areas, and promote recreation opportunities and environmental awareness and advise and recommend on any issue which the

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Commission determines necessary or advisable for the enhancement and stewardship of the ~~urban-forestenvironment on~~ both public and private ~~land~~;

~~16.C~~ Provide advice to staff, the Town Council, and the Council President on successful implementation of any plans including but not limited to environmental sustainability, environmental justice, climate mitigation, climate adaptation, and climate resilience, and on how that work can be performed more efficiently and effectively;

~~17.D~~ Advise the staff, the Town Council, and the Council President on opportunities to realize equity and fairness across the diverse communities that represent the Town of Highland through its sustainability programs and any policies or actions that impact ~~the~~ environmental quality of the town;

~~18.E~~ Provide suggestions to staff, the Town Council, and the Council President on how to better engage and involve Town of Highland residents and businesses in sustainability issues;

~~19.F~~ Identify and track the metrics measuring the progress of the sustainability aims of the Commission;

~~20.G~~ Coordinate communication between agencies, departments, commissions, and boards working on sustainability issues ~~and education~~;

~~24.H~~ Coordinate and collaborate with the Highland Tree Board regarding any efforts concerning public and private trees and the stewardship of the ~~urban-forestenvironment~~.

~~22.I~~ Perform outreach and ~~coordinate~~ ~~advise on~~ grant development with relevant municipal staff to support sustainability projects in ~~multiple-areas~~ ~~the town~~;

~~23.J~~ Collaborate with municipal staff to draft new or amended policies to further the sustainability aims of the Commission.

(2) It shall be the aim of the Commission to: ~~assist the Town Council, other boards and commissions of the town, and the town staff, when requested by said bodies or persons, to:~~

~~4.A~~ Advocate all aspects of sustainability: equity, environment, and economy;

~~5.B~~ Advocate for the conservation of energy sources, energy efficient buildings, and the use of renewable, clean energy;

~~6.C~~ Promote waste diversion by encouraging composting, recycling, reusing material, and refusing products or materials that would otherwise contribute to polluting our environment and contributing to the waste stream;

~~7.D~~ Advocate the prevention of illegal dumping and littering;

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- 8.E Promote the use of local food sources and local sourcing of products;
- 9.F Promote local organizations and businesses that adopt and implement sustainable practices;
- 10.G Promote the care, stewardship, and respect of natural areas and their respective species;
- 11.H Promote home gardening, pollinator gardens, and tree plantings (along with the Highland Tree Board) that support native species, improve access to fresh foods, and improve our physical and mental health;
- 12.I Promote the development of public green spaces, sidewalks, and bike paths;
- 13.J Promote the use of public transportation and eco-friendly vehicles;
- 14.K Promote the minimization of urban runoff and pollution of our water resources;
- 15.L Advocate for clean air and water and promote actions that would help improve environmental quality and public health, including but not limited to reducing noise pollution, light pollution, and the consumption of resource-intensive foods;
- 16.M Advocate environmental justice principles in all of the Commission's work to ensure equity is fairly reflected for all Town of Highland residents regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and/or disability;
- 17.N Advocate for local businesses becoming more sustainable;
- 18.O When appropriate, and subject to the approval of the Council President and the Town Council, enter into contracts, and apply for and accept grants for the administration of conservation projects that may contribute to the strengthening and refinement of a coordinated sustainability program;
- 19.P Assure a coordinated ~~Tewntown~~-wide effort in achieving a comprehensive sustainability program in our community.

b) **Membership; Governing Regulation of the Commission**

- 2.A Appointments. The Commission shall be composed of seven members. All seven (7) members shall be residents of the Town of Highland ~~with at least one (1) member involved in environmental efforts.~~ Two (2) members shall be students that represent the Town of Highland's middle school and/or high school and shall be nominated by their respective principal(s).

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Members shall be appointed and removed by the Council President, with advice and consent of the Town Council.

- 3-B** Terms. Four (4) members shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years and three (3) members for a term of one (1) year. Thereafter, each member appointed shall serve for a term of two (2) years or until the member's successor is duly appointed and qualified, or until the member is removed. No members shall serve more than four (4) consecutive terms.
- 4-C** Compensation. All members shall serve without compensation.
- 5-D** Expenses. The expenses for carrying on the Commission's activities may be budgeted for and paid out of the funds in the ~~Town~~town treasury and appropriated by the Town Council. Members may be reimbursed for conference fees, travel, mileage, and per diem expenses as preapproved by the Town Council and the Commission on Sustainability.
- 6-E** Removal. A member of the Commission may be removed by the appointing authority for without cause during his or her term. If any member fails to attend (3) successive meetings, without reasonable cause and without prior approval of the chairperson, the Commission shall declare the member's office vacant and promptly notify the appointing agency~~Town Council~~ of said vacancy.
- 7-F** Vacancy. The ~~appointing authority~~Town Council President, with the advice and consent of the Town Council, shall fill a vacancy on the Commission by appointing a new member for the unexpired term. A vacancy on the commission shall not impair the right of the remaining members to exercise all the powers of the Commission. Meetings of the Commission require a proper quorum of at least four (4) members to be present.
- 8-G** Meetings. The Commission shall convene no less frequently than once every month, unless deemed unnecessary by the chairperson with written agreement by a majority of the members of the Commission. The Commission may meet more often, should the demand necessitate. The Commission may, at any meeting, set a future meeting date.
- 9-H** Minutes. Minutes shall be kept of all Commission meetings, including the vote of each member upon each action by the Commission. The minutes of all Commission meetings shall be sent to the Town Clerk-~~Treasurer~~ and the Council President within thirty (30) days following said meeting.
- 10-I** Quorum. Four (4) members shall constitute a quorum of the Commission at all times.
- 11-J** Election of Officers. At the first meeting of each year, the Commission shall elect members to serve as the Chairperson, the Successor Chair, the Secretary, and the Treasurer for a term of one (1) year.

c) **Organization and Conduct of Meetings.** The Chairperson may call a meeting of the Commission. Meetings may also be called by written notice

signed by at least three (3) members of the Commission. The Commission may, at any meeting, set a future meeting date. Decisions are made by simple majority vote.

d) **Duties and responsibilities.** The Commission shall have the duties and responsibilities to carry out the aims and goals as defined in the Section, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 2.A Advise the Council President and, where appropriate, the Town Council, on ~~the Town Council's~~ hiring of any personnel necessary to the implementation of this Section;
- 3.B Develop broad sustainability metrics;
- 4.C Develop short-term and long-range goals;
- 5.D Track annual progress on annual and long-range goals, as well as broad sustainability metrics;
- 6.E Report at least annually, in writing, on its activities to the Council President and the Town Council;
- 7.F Apply for any federal, state, local, or private grants, appropriations, or gifts, when appropriate, subject to the approval of the Council President and the Town Council, in order to carry out the purposes of the Section;
- 8.G Propose other ordinances in order to carry out this Section and to propose additions or amendments to this Section as deemed necessary and appropriate to ensure the effectiveness of this Section;
- 9.H The Commission, with the permission of the Town Council, may prepare and implement educational programs in order to support and emphasize the purpose and intent of the Section among the various groups and individuals in the Town, to further goodwill among such groups and individuals, and to publicize and encourage participation in this and other boards and commissions.

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e) ~~Intra-governmental Cooperation. All boards, councils, commissions, and departments of the government of the Town of Highland are directed to give full cooperation to the Town of Highland Commission on Sustainability.~~

f) **Fund Established.** There is hereby established a Commission on Sustainability Donation Fund. This Fund shall be a restricted, non-reverting fund. The purpose of this Fund shall be for the receipt of money from contributions and donations from private citizens, businesses, organizations, fundraisers, and other possible sources and said monies shall be used for the Commission on Sustainability. Expenditures from this Fund shall be used for the following purposes with the approval of the Town Council:

- 1.A Materials and supplies for use in the operation of the Commission;
- 2.B Education of the public, including promotional, educational, and training supplies, and for community events;
- 3.C Training and advocacy for Commission members, including transportation and lodging;
- 4.D Educational scholarships; and

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- ~~5.E~~ Grants to entities, organizations, and activities identified under Indiana Code as being able to receive aid from a unit, which include the following:
 - ~~6.F~~ Parks, playgrounds and recreational facilities and programs (IC 36-10-2-2);
 - ~~7.G~~ Museums, cultural, historical, and scientific facilities and programs, and community restitution or service facilities and programs (IC 36-10-2-4);
 - ~~8.H~~ Neighborhood center, community centers, civic centers, convention centers as defined by IC 36-10-1-5, auditoriums, arenas, and stadiums (IC 36-10-2-5);
 - ~~9.I~~ Transportation systems (IC 36-9-2-2);
 - ~~10.J~~ Hospitals (IC 36-8-2-5); and
 - ~~11.K~~ Airports, bus terminals, train terminals, and transportation facilities (IC 9-2-3).
- The Commission shall not use the funds in the Fund for any other purposes than those stated herein.

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This Ordinance to be effective upon passage by the Town Council, approval by the Council President, and necessary publication, and any necessary approval by the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance.

INTRODUCED BY: _____
[NAME], Member
Town of Highland Town Council

CO-SPONSOR BY: _____
[NAME], Member
Town of Highland Town Council

[NAME], Member
Town of Highland Town Council

[NAME], Member
Town of Highland Town Council

[NAME], Member
Town of Highland Town Council

Passed by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Indiana, this ____ day of _____, ~~[XYZ]~~ by a vote of ____ ~~to~~ in favor and ~~opposed.~~

[NAME], Member
Town of Highland Town Council

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Approved by me, this ___ day of ___, [XYZ],

[NAME]
Town of Highland, Indiana

ATTEST:

[NAME], Clerk
Town of Highland, Indiana

Cathy Perrin began by saying that since there was concern at the last study session with a seven- member Commission, we changed the number of members to 5. They were also concerned with having high school students on the Commission. Whereas, they want the involvement of young people, maybe being in high school is too young so they are looking at maybe an age of 25, however, they thought it was cool that several high school students are member of the Tree Board. They also changed how many members had to be present to have a quorum from 5 members to 3.

Councilor Zemen commented that the students were mainly seniors and after graduation they moved on.

Councilor Schocke asked Cathy is one member of the proposed Commission would mainly be in charge of getting Grants.

Cathy responded that we have some members in our community who are really good at getting grants and we would take advantage of their expertise.

Councilor Schocke asked Cathy about the matching grant where the Town has to put in 20% and the State matches the Town 80%. How will that 20% be funded? He wanted to know that if the Commission applies for a grant and it is a matching grant, at what point will the Town be made aware of their portion and what if the Town doesn't have the money available.

Cathy said she was under the impression that the Commission was only in nature and would do all the leg work and forward the information to the Town when to proceed and apply for the grant or to pass on the grant. Also, they would not have a problem with taking the same approach as the Tree Board. She said, in many cases, if the entity is not part of the Town, they cannot even apply for the grant. So as mentioned previously, we would do the leg work and submit to the Town to decide if to proceed or pass on the grant.

Councilor Schocke said I understand what you are saying but I still like to see a procedure spelled out. I see on page 4 regarding fund establishment but it is basically unclear. Does the Commission have the power to initiate the grant process and bring to the Council for approval? Is it the Town Council or the Town Council President who has to approve because

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it doesn't really say that here. It says the Commission would apply for any federal, state and local grant, subject to the approval of the Town Council President, so presumably we would approve after the Commission applied for it. I'm just looking for a little more clarity. Make it a little cleaner.

Councilor Zemen said he felt that the Town Council President should be removed from each line and leave the approval to the Town Council.

Carlos Aburto responded that just a few seconds ago, Cathy said the Commission was advisor in nature and it cannot apply for grants unless it is affiliated with the Town, so the Commission would have to come to the Town for approval.

Councilor Smith wanted to know who was going to write the grants? Would it be the Commission or would the Commission expect a support person from the Town to write the grant. You may have volunteers to write the grants but the Town would have to pay an employee to write the grants.

Cathy said they would like to work with the Tree Board as she knows the Tree Board is getting grants on a regular basis.

Councilor Schocke said that sounded like a great idea but he would have to review the I would have to review the Tree Ordinance. He also questioned the need to have members of the Commission bonded because they are handling money, especially the treasurer or maybe the president.

Councilor Sheeman responded that we just discussed this topic and it was determined that not everyone has to be bonded but only those handling the money. As for a treasurer, the HCCE has a treasurer but the Tree Board does not. I don't see a need for them to have a treasurer. The Town will control the funds. He asked the Clerk-Treasurer how is it handled by Main Street or HCCE. The Clerk-Treasurer responded that all monies received are cash receipted by the Office of the Clerk-Treasurer into the proper accounts and any expenditures are paid from those accounts by the Office of the Clerk-Treasurer upon receiving a receipt.

Councilor Schocke and Carlos Aburto continued their discussion on grants as to what that statement actually meant with Carlos saying the Commission didn't have the authority to apply for grants without the Council's approval and Councilor Schocke saying he would love for it to be that way but he doesn't read the statement that way. . No agreement was reached by them .

Councilor Schocke wanted to know why a Commission versus just an advisory board. He was concerned that as a Commission, they would be able to speak for the Town. They would be speaking as representatives for the Town. A Commission would give them authority versus as an advisory board, they can't speak for the Town. I'm trying to figure out why it is so important to be a Commission.

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Cathy disagreed that if they are not a Commission, they could not apply for grants as they need to be associated with the Town. We are willing to work hard to bring the Town grants and other ideas and do the forward thinking for the Town and to do it for free. It is a no brainer.

Carlos Aburto responded that the establishment of a Commission is the beginning of the process, that the Town is really buying into the process, the process of sustainability. That when buildings are being planned or playgrounds being designed, you look for available grants and use those grants to purchase that material that helps sustain the environment. Like recyclables to be used in parking lots to help drain the rain water.

Councilor Zemen said on the front page of last Sunday's Times, there was an article that Indiana's Governor Holcomb want to take Indiana in the direction of sustainability.

Councilor's Smith and Schocke both asked Carlos, why as a park board member hasn't he pushed the park department in the area of sustainability.

Carlos responded because he wasn't aware of it. He had to be educated which is happening right now. I have always known about sustainability but I didn't get the message. I never gravitated towards it. I didn't know what was involved. And then, I found this and wow. Like this is awesome. Now, I've got to convince you guys. I haven't presented it the Park Board as I need to convince you first. It's an opportunity. I hope this Town will start practicing responsible sustainability. You start by educating the people. We have the tools to do that if the Council is willing to do it. We have a very highly regarded and respected Community of Sustainability. I don't why its so hard.

Councilor Schocke responded that its not hard, I'm just asking a lot of questions. I can be convinced and I realize that I've wrong before. I realize this organization has the best intentions.

Larry Kondrat started to speak and was cut short by Councilor Zemen saying that I'm sure your comments are not about sustainability and I'm not about to start World War III.

Mary Hackett said sustainability crosses over more much broader areas than say parks. I think it affects all areas of the Town. I imagine the Commission as providing input and advice but not really advice but education across multi-lines and currently the Town doesn't have an existing board or commission. It the same reason a Tree Board was formed. Again, I think it is a much broader approach than any current department in the Town can offer.

Councilor Schocke responded that the purpose was to basically get the certification of Tree City, USA, which is supposedly to make Highland a nicer place to live with more foliage. It puts a nice little feather in Highland's cap. I think people generally like trees. When reading through the ordinance and again, I only got it at 5:37 p.m. tonight, is t that it talks about light pollution for example. And I agree with that as I will sometime go outside with my daughters to look at the stars through their telescope and when we face the direction of Stracks, the lights from the parking lot ruin the view. I know that when a developer comes before the Plan Commission, they have to submit a lighting plan. The developer has to comply with the lighting plan. My point, those regulations are in place, so I feel this ordinance is overlapping with other department, boards and commissions. I realizing that I'm cherry picking but I'm thinking we can take this ordinance and amend existing regulations rather than forming a new commission.

Cathy asked if the light standards had shades that direct the light down as not to affect migrating birds. I feel these other boards and commissions have not taken that into affect.

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Councilor Sheeman added that under establishment, in particular B, is talks about awareness, advising and recommending any issue that the Commission determines necessary or advisable for the enhancement and stewardship of both public and private land. We already have standards regarding green space regulations by the Plan Commission, the Redevelopment Commission, already in place. Some established in the Town Code. I can see a conflict between this ordinance and some regulations already in place and I don't know how it can be reconciled. He asked for clarification under establishment of purpose and intent. The numbering is weird as there is no number 1 but starts with number 2. Look under M, an advocate for Environmental Justice and Principles as the Commission will work to ensure equity is fairly reflected for all Town of Highland residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and or disability. I googled environmental justice. Can anyone tell me how it looks? What does it actually look like on a day to day basis with this Commission?

Cathy countered and asked the Council if they would like to save money. One of the big and upcoming things that is happening world wide with sustainability is leaving natural areas and not mowing. I live by the Little Calumet River and a lot of time is spent cutting the grass, using gasoline or diesel fuel. By mowing, you are cutting down all the wild flowers and milkweeds that grow on the river's bank. Maybe they can mow less often. If we planted along the river bank or bike trail or other areas, the native plants you wouldn't have to mow and you would save substantially on manhours. And we're not going to plant wild flowers in your front yard, I promise. Maybe you can leave a little bit while to provide food for the pollinators and food for the birds which will be a win-win situation.

Councilor Schocke said I am struggling how this ordinance applies to Highland. We already have zoning ordinances in place to protect our residents.

Cathy said the Commission is working with the EPA. We are working toward solidarity for the whole country and not advocate for inequality and injustice which Councilor Schocke you seem to be advocating for. We want everyone to have seat at the table.

Councilor Schocke, again it sounds really nice but I just trying to figure out how it specifically applies to Highland? This sounds like a global conversation, so why is group confining it to Highland? Why aren't you trying to get the County to adopt a similar ordinance.

Cathy said are trying to get the seeds planted in the County. We have ½ the kids attending Highland schools are on the free or reduced lunch program. We have shop with a cop. We have the food pantry.

Councilor Schocke said I understand the food pantry and the free or reduced lunch in Highland. I am glad that we have a federal program. I'm glad it exists but the government for the Town of Highland doesn't have anything to do with it. There are plenty of public needs right here. There's cancer survivors right here and we all know of a survivor or their family or friends but the Town of Highland doesn't have a cancer commission.

Cathy said we are fortunate to become good stewards of our streets and parks and other areas of the Town. By passing this ordinance and establishing a Commission, you will be setting an example in leading other communities that are bullied, those who don't have a voice. The Sustainability movement is a solidarity movement to be good stewards of what we have left. Its about speaking about the problem so other communities will have a voice. Those communities less fortunate. We advocate equity. We want environmental justice. Communities let refineries or chemical plants into their communities. Then 40 years later the residents are having side effects because of those plants. Just because it doesn't happen here or you don't speak about it, doesn't mean it doesn't exist. The environment is everybody's responsibility. That's the difference. Everyone does something to either help or hurt the

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environment and the more education you put out there and the more cooperation and collaboration you have with organizations, like sustainability commissions the better off everybody becomes. If not for you, think about your children and grandchildren. We have to do a better job. We have to become better stewards.

Councilor Schocke said I'm not saying we don't need it, I'm saying I don't understand how it fits here in Highland. I think you would find my views and those of Carlos are very similar. I drive a hybrid car. I have my own vegetable garden. I compost. I think you guys as a group are wonderful. I'm just trying to figure out how the governmental entity of Highland fits into this equation.

There was some discussion about the removal of members. Councilor Schocke asked Attorney Bilsle to reach out to Attorney Reed to determine how a member can be removed. How can members be removed by the appointing authorities? Can they actually be removed at any time without any cause?

Council Zemen thanked everyone for coming and asked that it be placed on the December 5th study session to make final revisions before being placed on the plenary meeting agenda. He asked Councilor Schocke and Attorney Reed to review and edit the ordinance and be prepared to discuss at the December 5th study session.

Cathy Perrin passed the document.

https://www.nydimes.com/news/local/lake/highland/highland-residents-ask-town-council-to-create-a-sustainability-commission/article_d378d0d9-82a1-5713-8298-3a1331542ee8.html

October 28, 2022

A group of Highland residents are trying to start a sustainability commission.
File, The Times

HIGHLAND — When David and Sarah Masciotra moved to Highland 10 years ago, they were attracted by the town's trails, the Heron Rookery and the walkable downtown.

Now he and other Highland residents want to ensure that the town's natural resources will be protected for generations to come.

"There's often a misperception that there's a conflict between economic vitality and environmentalism," Masciotra said during an Oct. 24 town council meeting. He and Sarah are "living proof that they often work in tandem because conservation, natural beauty and sustainability are highly appealing to young people, young families and retirees looking to relocate."

Masciotra was one of 12 people who spoke in favor of creating a town sustainability commission during the public comment session. The group **Highland Neighbors for Sustainability**, formed in 2020, has drafted legislation for the commission's creation.

"We hope the council recognizes the value of a citizen-led sustainability commission to research and bring back suggested solutions on environmental topics," Connie Wachala said.

The idea came out of the **recent greenhouse gas inventory** completed through the **Indiana University Environmental Resilience Cohort**. In 2021, Earth Charter Indiana, NWI Region Resilience and the Northwest Indiana Regional

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Planning Commission (NIRPC), banded together and joined the cohort.

The team was able to get funding for six climate fellows to conduct greenhouse-gas inventories for Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties as well as for Cedar Lake, Chesterton, East Chicago, Highland, Hobart, Lake Station, the city of LaPorte, Merrillville, Munster, Schererville and Valparaiso.

The project was later extended, so they were able to inventory Hammond and Portage too.

Industry accounted for the bulk of the Region's overall emissions, but residential emissions were the biggest slice of the pie in Cedar Lake, Chesterton, Hobart, Lake Station, Schererville and Highland.

In Year 2 of the Environmental Resilience Cohort, participants create a Climate Action Plan. Because every community in the Region is so unique, NIRPC, NWI Region Resilience and Earth Charter are creating a climate action plan that features a menu of options. Municipalities can select the options that are most applicable.

Because members of city and town councils often have outside jobs and are "so involved in the day-to-day nitty gritty of trying to run a city or town," Wachala said, it might be hard to actually enact the climate action plans without a dedicated commission.

The sustainability commission "can be an aid if they (the town council) let us," Wachala said.

The ordinance for the proposed commission is being reviewed by the town's legal counsel. Wachala said the commission would likely have five representatives and would, hopefully, include local students. The

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commission would research various sustainability initiatives and bring suggestions to the town council.

"There's a lot of folks that care about the environment," Alex Bazán said, "and I think a sustainability commission provides that added capacity to support staff in the town of Highland to do more in terms of looking at different environmental issues."

Sustainability efforts look different across Northwest Indiana, Wachala said, but communities can learn from one another.

Michigan City and the city of LaPorte already have commissions, Gary has a Department of Sustainability and Environmental Affairs, and [Valparaiso has a citizen-led sustainability group](#).

"If you all will pass this, it puts leverage on these other communities that should see the value of it," Linda Anguiano of Hammond told the council at the Oct. 24 meeting. "If we all work together, we can have a really strong Region."

The sustainability commission legislation will be discussed during the Highland Town Council's study session Nov. 21, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

X. Discussion: Appointment of Tom Black as Highland's appointment to NIRPC.

Whereas, the appointment is an executive appointment, the Council conferred with the appointment of Tom Black to NIRPC.

Memorandum of Meeting
Monday, November 21, 2022



TOWN OF HIGHLAND

Highland Municipal Building • 3333 Ridge Road
Highland, Indiana 46322
219-838-1080 • Fax 219-972-5097



Population 23,696
Incorporated in 1910

CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT

November 28, 2022

TO: Mr. Ty Warner, Executive Director
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
6100 Southport Road
Portage, Indiana 46368

FROM: Bernie Zemen
Town Council President
3333 Ridge Road
Highland, Indiana 46322

In accordance with Indiana Code Title 36, Article 7, Chapter 7.6, I hereby Certify that I have appointed the following elected person to serve on the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission. It is my desire that you grant to this person all the rights and privileges belonging to a member of the Commission. Effective for 2022-2023.

Full Name: Thomas Black
Title: Vice: President of Town Council
Address: 3515 Garfield St. Highland, IN 46322
Telephone Number(s): 1-219-301-2077
Email: tblack@highland.in.gov

Bernie Zemen/Town Council President

Printed on 50% recycled paper.

X. **Discussion:** Pay increase for the Office of the Town Council equal to that afforded the Town Employees.

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Section 6. *Town Legislative Body, Boards and Commissions.* That subject to the provisions of this ordinance, the salary and wages for the elected officers, non-elected officers and employees of the Town of Highland are hereby fixed for its departments and offices as follows:

(A) Office of the Town Council

Town Council President(1) \$ 1,508.00 per month \$1,568.32 *

Town Council Member (4) \$ 1,432.00 per month \$1,489.28*

*the annual compensation for the Office of the Town Council will increase equal to the percentage increase awarded to the Town Employees, automatically, each year a raise is given and is self-implementing without any specific vote by the Town Council, unless disapproved by the Town Council. In the event when a raise of different percentages is given to different departments, the raise to the Office of Town Council will be the lowest percentage.

Town Council Attorney paid at an hourly rate according to terms set forth in attorney's letter of acceptance on file.

X. Discussion: Works Board Order No. 2022-26: A RESOLUTION OF THE HIGHLAND TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE DISPOSAL OF THE FALL MUMS BY THE HIGHLAND PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

THE COUNCIL CONCURRED TO PLACE IT ON THE AGENDA

**TOWN of HIGHLAND, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA
TOWN COUNCIL
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-26**

A RESOLUTION OF THE HIGHLAND TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE DISPOSAL OF THE FALL MUMS BY THE HIGHLAND PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

WHEREAS, The Town Council for the Town of Highland is the Works Board of the Municipality pursuant to IC 36-1-2-24(3); and

WHEREAS, The Town Council has been advised by the Public Works Director that as fall ends, the Fall Mums will no longer be needed to serve the purpose for which they were originally acquired, pursuant to IC 5-22-22; and

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WHEREAS, The Town Council has been further advised by the Public Works Director that the Lawn and Landscaping Company who provides the landscape services in Downtown Highland has advised the Public Works Director that the Fall Mums will be removed from the downtown planters in the next several weeks; and

WHEREAS, The Landscape Service Company has further advised the Public Works Director that they do not recycle the mums and that said mums will be placed in the trash receptacle; and

WHEREAS, The Landscape Service Company has been further advised by the Public Works Director that mums can be recycled and are willing to work with the Town to recycle the mums; and

WHEREAS, The Public Works Director has recommended that the removed mums be offered to the Highland Park and Recreation Department, as well as the general public while the supply lasts, at no charge, rather than simply throwing the mums into a trash receptacle; and

WHEREAS, Although the Public Works Director prefers recycling of the mums rather than throwing them away, the mums are of no value to Town of Highland; and

WHEREAS The Town Council now desires to approve the recommendation of the Public Works Director and take those steps necessary to authorize and approve the disposal of the mums to the Highland Parks and Recreation Department and or the general public on a first come and first serve basis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana:

Section 1. That the Town Council of the Town of Highland, acting as the works board, hereby finds and determines the following:

(A) That there is a certain property possessed or owned by the municipality that is no longer needed, and unfit for the purposes for which it was acquired, pursuant to IC 5-22-22-3; or,

(B) That there is a certain article of personal property possessed or owned by the municipality that may be deemed worthless or of no market value as the estimated cost of the sale and transportation of the property exceeds the property value, pursuant to IC 5-22-22-8.

Section 2. That the Public Works Director is hereby authorized and instructed to cause a lawful disposal or transfer of the fall mums identified in this Resolution by offering same to the Highland Parks and Recreation Department and/or the general public.

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Section 3. That no notice of the disposal is necessary pursuant to IC 5-22-22-6.

BE IT SO ORDERED.

DULY ADOPTED and ORDERED BY the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, acting as the Board of Works, this 28th day of November 2022, having passed by a vote of in favor and opposed.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA

Bernie Zemen, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5)

X. Discussion: 9. Authorizing the proper officer to publish legal notice of a public hearing: Public Hearing to consider additional appropriations in the amount of \$69,422 in the Redevelopment Capital.

4406-0000-34002 Façade Improvement
45th Street Partners \$26,132
NWI Parkinsons \$3,290
Nephilim Studios \$40,000

**TOWN OF HIGHLAND
NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS OF PROPOSED
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS**

Notice is hereby given the taxpayers of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, that the Town Council of said Municipality in said Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, at 6:30 p.m. on the 12th day of December 2022, will consider the following

Memorandum of Meeting
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additional appropriations in excess of the budget for the current year in the following funds:

Redevelopment Capital Fund

Acct. 4406-0000-34002 Façade Improvement (45 th Street)	\$ 26,132.00
Acct. 4406-0000-34002 Façade Improvement (NWI Parkinson)	\$ 3,290.00
Acct. 4406-0000-34002 Façade Improvement (Nephilim)	\$ 40,000.00
Total 400 Series:	<u>\$ 69,422.00</u>

TOTAL for the FUND: **\$ 69,422.00**

Funds to support these additional appropriations in the **Redevelopment Capital Fund** shall be supported by miscellaneous revenue, unreserved unobligated fund balance on deposit to the credit of the fund.

Taxpayers appearing at such meeting shall have a right to be heard thereon. Taxpayers are asked to contact the Office of the Clerk-Treasurer at (219) 838-1080 to provide an email address to allow the Zoom platform information to be provided as the meeting is still being conducted as an Electronic/In Person Hybrid. You may also write to the Office of the Clerk Treasurer if you have concerns. The additional appropriations, as finally made, will be filed with the Department of Local Government Finance, for its review. The Department of Local Government Finance shall make a written determination of the sufficiency of funds within fifteen days of receipt of a certified copy of the action taken.

TOWN COUNCIL of HIGHLAND

Bernie Zemen, President

By: Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer

There being no further business necessary or desired to be discussed by the Town Council, the regular study session of the Town Council of Monday, November 21, 2022, was adjourned by the Town Council President, at 7:37 O'clock p.m.

Mark Herak,
Clerk-Treasurer