

**Enrolled Minutes of the Eighty-First Regular Meeting or Special Meeting
For the Twenty-Ninth Highland Town Council
Regular Plenary Business Meeting (Electronic/In person Hybrid)
Monday, November 28, 2022**

The Twenty-Ninth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met in its regular plenary session on Monday, November 28, 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, and supported the public's ability to observe and record the proceedings. People were able to participate in person and remotely. When the agenda item provided for public comment, this was supported as well. Councilor Zemen, Councilor Toya Smith, Councilor Schocke, Councilor Tom Black, Councilor Roger Sheeman all participated in person.

Pursuant to HMC Section 2.05.130(A)(2), the Town Council considered and reviewed the agenda in an informal proceeding in the plenary meeting room before the president called the meeting to order.

The Town Council President Bernie Zemen presided. The Town Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak, was present to memorialize the proceedings. The meeting was opened with Councilor Roger Sheeman reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and offering a prayer.

Roll Call: Present on roll call were Councilors Bernie Zemen, Toya Smith, Mark J. Schocke, Thomas Black, Roger Sheeman and Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak were present. A quorum was attained.

Additional Officials Present: Mark Knesek, Public Works Director; Pete Hojnicky, Metropolitan Police Chief; William R. Timmer, Jr., CFOD, Fire Chief; Edward Dabrowski, Director of Information Technology; Kenneth J. Mika, Building Commissioner and Maria Becerra, Redevelopment Director were all present. Alex Brown, CPRP, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation was remote and John Reed, Attorney with Abrahamson, Reed & Bilse was absent.

Guests: Theresa Badovich (remotely) and Robin Carlascio (remotely) of the Idea Factory were also present.

Minutes of the Previous Meetings: The minutes of the November 14, 2022 Plenary meeting were approved by general consent.

Comments from the Public or Visitors: None

Special Orders: None

Communications: The Town Council will meet in study session immediately following the Regular Plenary Meeting.

Staff Reports:

Appointments: The Town Council President appointed Councilman Thomas Black to NIRPC in accordance with Indiana Code Title 36, Article 7, Chapter 7.6 Councilman Black will remain in that position till his term of office expires or recalled by the Council president.



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

General Orders and Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

1. **WORKS BOARD ORDER NO. 2022-38:** AN ORDER OF THE WORKS BOARD APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE IT DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A LEASE RENTAL- MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT FOR ONE PITNEY BOWES POSTAGE METERING DEVICE, PURSUANT TO IC 5-22 AND §31.18(C) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE. *(THIS NEW AGREEMENT IS FOR 60 MONTHS AND AT A MONTHLY AMOUNT OF \$149.94. U.S. POSTAL REGULATIONS PROHIBIT OUTRIGHT OWNERSHIP OF A U.S. POSTAL METER MACHINE.)*

Councilor Black moved to approve Works Board Order No.2022-38. Councilor Sheeman seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed and Works Board Order No. 2022-38 was adopted pending the signature of the municipal executive.

**Town of Highland
Board of Works
Order of the Works Board 2022-38**

AN ORDER OF THE WORKS BOARD APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE IT DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A LEASE- AGREEMENT FOR ONE PITNEY BOWES POSTAGE METERING DEVICE, PURSUANT TO IC 5-22 AND SECTION 3.05.050 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE.

WHEREAS, The Town of Highland, through its Town Council, has determined that a need exists to continue to utilize a postage metering device to provide efficient postal metering service to the several departments of the Town, pursuant to Highland Municipal Code, Section 3.05.030(A);

WHEREAS, The Town Clerk-Treasurer is the purchasing agent for the several executive departments of the Town, all pursuant to Highland Municipal Code, Section 03.05.050(D)(9);

WHEREAS, The Town of Highland through its Office of the Clerk-Treasurer has substantially complied with the provisions of the Highland Municipal Code, Section 3.05.060(G)(2), having ascertained that both the total use rental price of the equipment sought and the annual payments under the considered lease rental agreement are profoundly less than the recorded quote threshold of \$50,000, totaling \$1,799.28 per year and \$8,996.40 for the duration of the agreement;

WHEREAS, The Town of Highland through its Office of the Clerk-Treasurer did review this renewal offer from **Pitney Bowes** for a **sixty (60) month lease rental agreement**

for a **9H00 SendPro C Auto System Digital Postage Metering Device and US Postal Scale** found its price reasonable, nearly the same as the current cost of service, and recommends its approval; and

WHEREAS, As purchasing agency for the Office IT Director and several executive departments of the Town, the Highland Town Council must approve any leases or rental agreements with duration of greater than one year, all pursuant to the Highland Municipal Code, Sections 3.05.030 (A), 3.05.040(C) and 3.05.050(B)(1);

WHEREAS, There are sufficient and available appropriation and cash balances on credit to the proper Funds for 2022 to support the rental payments under the terms of the proposed agreement and the issuance of a purchase order, all pursuant to I.C. 5-22-17-3(e) and I.C. 5-22-18-5;

WHEREAS, The Town Council, as the works board of the municipality, wishes now to act on the proposed lease rental agreement now presented,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Indiana as follows:

Section 1. That Lease with Rental Agreement as presented by **Pitney Bowes** for a **sixty (60) month lease rental and maintenance** agreement for a **9H00 SendPro C Auto System Digital Postage Metering Device and US Postal Scale** is hereby accepted and approved in each and every respect;

Section 2. That the proposed lease rental and maintenance charges presented in the offer, providing a monthly payment of **\$149.94** is reasonable and fair;

Section 3. That the IT Director is hereby authorized and directed to execute the agreement and any additional documents in order to implement the terms of this accepted offer;

Section 4. That when the fiscal body of the governmental body makes a written determination that funds are not appropriated or otherwise available to support continuation of performance of a contract, the contract is considered canceled and a determination by the fiscal body that funds are not appropriated or otherwise available to support continuation of performance is final and conclusive, all pursuant to IC 5-22-17-5.

Section 5. That the Clerk-Treasurer is hereby authorized to expend appropriated funds as budgeted in order to support and implement the agreement.

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 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

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

Attest:

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

2. AUTHORIZE THE PROPER OFFICER TO PUBLISH LEGAL NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING. PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDERING ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$69,422.00 IN THE REDEVELOPMENT CAPITAL FUND TO BE HELD ON DECEMBER 12, 2022, AT 6:30 P.M. O'CLOCK IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 3333 ROAD, HIGHLAND.

COUNCILOR BLACK MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE PUBLICATION OF A LEGAL NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER PROPOSED ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS IN THE CAPITAL REDEVELOPMENT FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$69,422.00 AS INDICATED. COUNCILOR SHEEMAN SECONDED. UPON A ROLL CALL VOTE, THERE WERE FIVE AFFIRMATIVES AND NO NEGATIVES. THE MOTION PASSED. THE PUBLICATION AND HEARING WERE APPROVED. THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE ON THE 12TH DAY OF DECEMBER. THE MEETING IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AT 6:30.

Authorizing the proper officer to publish legal notice of a public hearing: Public Hearing to consider additional appropriations in the amount of \$69,422.00 in the Redevelopment Capital Fund.

**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 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:	\$ 69,422.00

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

3. RESOLUTION NO. 2022-26: A RESOLUTION OF THE HIGHLAND TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE RECOMMENDATION BY THE HIGHLAND PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR FOR THE DISPOSAL OF THE FALL MUMS.

COUNCILOR SHEEMAN MOVED THE PASSAGE AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2022-26. COUNCILOR BLACK SECONDED. UPON A ROLL CALL VOTE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIALS, THERE WERE FIVE (5) AFFIRMATIVES AND NO NEGATIVES. THE MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION NO. 2022-26 WAS ADOPTED PENDING THE SIGNATURE OF THE MUNICIPAL EXECUTIVE.

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

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.

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 5 in favor and 0 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)

4. WORK BOARD ORDER NO. 2022-40: AN ORDER OF THE WORKS BOARD APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE METROPOLITAN POLICE CHIEF TO

**PURCHASE FROM FLETCHER CHRYSLER DODGE JEEP RAM OF FRANKLIN, IN
THROUGH THE STATE OF INDIANA THREE (3) 2022 DODGE CHARGER PURSUIT
AWD V6 PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF IC 22-5-8.2 ET SEQ.**

Councilor Sheeman moved to amend the agenda to add Works Board Order No. 2022-40. Councilor Smith seconded. Upon a roll call vote, a unanimous vote being necessary to amend the agenda, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. Works Board Order No. 2022-40 was added to the agenda. Councilor Black then moved for the passage and adoption of Works Board Order No. 2022-40. Councilor Sheeman seconded. Upon a roll call vote of the elected officials, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. Works Board Order No. 2022-40 was adopted.

**Town of Highland
Board of Works
Order of the Works Board 2022-40**

An Order Approving and Authorizing the Metropolitan Police Chief to Purchase from Fletcher Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram of Franklin, IN through the State of Indiana (3) three 2022 Dodge Charger Pursuit AWD V6 pursuant to I.C. 5-22-8-3.

Whereas, The Town of Highland Metropolitan Police Department, as part of its public duties, has a responsibility for patrol, public safety and protection of life and property throughout the Town of Highland and, from time to time, it is necessary to purchase and or lease materials and supplies in order to carry out the functions of the department; and

Whereas, The Metropolitan Police Chief has determined a need to replace certain equipment and supplies and has further determined the purchase price will be below \$150,000.00.

Whereas, the Metropolitan Police Chief has identified Fletcher Chrysler Dodge of Franklin, IN through the State of Indiana to be a desirable source vendor for the purchase of three (3) 2022 White Dodge Charger Pursuit AWD V6 at price of for a final price of \$104,787.00 for all.

Whereas, the price for the purchase exceeds \$15,000.00 and, pursuant to Section 3.05.040 (E) as well as Section 3.05.050 (B) of the Highland Municipal Code, such purchase requires the express approval of the purchasing agency; and

Whereas, The Town Council as the Works Board of the Municipality, pursuant to Section 3.05.030 (A)(2) of the Highland Municipal Code serves as the purchasing agency for the Metropolitan Police Department; and

Whereas, The Metropolitan Police Chief, pursuant to Section 3.05.050 (D)(2) of the Highland Municipal Code, serves as the Purchasing Agent for the Metropolitan Police Department; and

Whereas, the purchase of the three (3) vehicles will be supported by a duly approved appropriation in the LOIT funds.

Whereas, The Town Council now desires to approve and authorize the Police Chief to complete the purchase pursuant to the terms and stated herein.

Now, Therefore Be It Ordered by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, acting as the Works Board of Municipality:

Section 1: That the Works Board hereby authorizes and approves the purchase from Fletcher Chrysler Dodge of Franklin, IN for the purchase of three (3) 2022 White Dodge Charger Pursuit AWD V6 at the price of \$104,787.00 pursuant to IC 5-22 and Section 3.05.065 (F) of the Highland Municipal Code;

Section 2: That the Metropolitan Police Chief is now authorized and approved to execute the purchase agreement and any additional documents in order to implement this purchase and then file these documents as financial materials with the Office of the Clerk-Treasurer, pursuant to IC 36-5-4-14.

Be It So Ordered.

DULY, PASSED, ADOPTED AND ORDERED by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, acting as the Works Board, this 28th day of November, 2022 having passed by a vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

TOWN COUNCIL OF THE
TOWN OF HIGHLAND, INDIANA

Bernie Zemen, President (IC36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark A. Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-16-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5)

Comments from the Town Council:
(Good of the order)

Councilor Toya Smith: • *Sanitary Board Liaison • and Public Works.*

Councilor Smith began by acknowledging Building Commissioner, Ken Mika who commented that the next BZA meeting will be on December 14th and currently they have only 1 item on the agenda and it is the approval of a Findings of Fact. However, he was advised of another potential item by a petitioner in the industrial park who wants to allow one of his buildings to be used for a cheerleading group might be on the agenda.

Councilor Smith then acknowledged Public Works Director, Mark Knesek. Mr. Knesek had said they hoped to finish up the remaining routes for picking up the leaves. Once completed, Public Works will go back to picking up branches with the chipper.

Councilor Sheeman ask the Public Works Director if the Town had received its allotment of salt. Mr. Knesek responded that the Town received its allotment of salt in the summer and the salt dome was full. The next allotment of salt won't be until next year. Unless we have a really bad winter, the Town should be fine on salt.

Councilor Black was inquiring as to the large crane he saw next to the Ridge Road water tank. Mr. Knesek explained that Verizon was in the process of updating their antennas which are located on the top of the water tank. The work was supposed to be done during the summer but got pushed back till now

Councilor Mark Schocke: • *Park and Recreation Liaison • and Community Events Commission Liaison.*

Councilor Schocke acknowledged Park Superintendent Alex Brown. Alex commented they have a very successful Pumpkin Plod with 1,080 participants. The weather was the nicest the Town's had for a pumpkin plod in the 26 years he's been associated with it. He said the parade and tree lighting went well on Saturday. He said the youth basketball games are starting this Saturday with over 400 hundred kids participating.

Councilor Schocke complimented the Park & Recreation, the Highland Police Department, the VIPS as they really did a great job making sure the race area was clear and everyone finished the race safely. He concurred with Alex's assessment that the weather was the best in the nineteen years he's run it. He said he was really excited about youth basketball starting Saturday, as he has a double header with his children this Saturday. He also complimented the HCCE and the Park Department for the Santa Parade and Tree lighting. He said he understood it went off without a hitch.

- **Councilor Tom Black:** *Liaison to the Board of Waterworks Directors • Redevelopment Commission Liaison*

- *NIRPC Representative • Joint Board of Delegates.*

Councilor Black asked the Redevelopment Director to comment on the last Redevelopment Meeting. She began by thanking the Council for considering the additional appropriation at the December 12th plenary meeting. She said the Commission have narrowed their search to 2 finalists for the Assistant Redevelopment Director position. Commissioner's Leep and Conley called both finalist and spoke with them. They will then narrow the choice to one and conduct an interview with them in executive session. They are planning on having the executive session on December 6. She said the Commission would like for the Council to participate in the interview. She reminded everyone that the restaurant crawl is tomorrow, Tuesday, November 29 from 4 to 8 p.m. She said they had a really good Main Street Bureau meeting. She said the members are really engaged and have activities planned for each month in 2023. She asked about the Way Finding Funding, as that will require an additional appropriation approved by the Council. She was advised that it would be placed on the December 5th study session.

Councilor Black said he brought up the Way Finding Signs and the Times Media agreement several weeks ago at a Council study session and is waiting for an answer from the Council.

Maria said the Commission approved the 2 solutions back in June. The cost at that time was around \$36,000. The signs would be placed strategically throughout Town with a larger sign being placed in the municipal lot. Basically, the signs will show you where you are and how you can get to the other various businesses in the downtown. She said ideally the signs would have a QR code but that is posing a little bit of an issue because the QR codes have to be linked to a website and the website has to be maintained. The cost would be roughly \$335 annually.

- **Councilor Roger Sheeman:** *Town Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners Liaison • Fire Department, Liaison • Chamber of Commerce Liaison • Information Communications and Technology Department Liaison.*

Councilor Sheeman acknowledged Metropolitan Police Chief Pete Hojnicky, who began by thanking the Clerk-Treasurer for finding the money so the Police Department could purchase the 3 additional cars. He said the shortage of cars is projected to last until 2026. He said the electric F-150's is costing us more upfront but we will save money down the road. He felt confident that they would get trucks as they come with an 80/20 grant and they come with the charging stations. He relayed that the County Police had ordered 25 vehicles and are receiving none.

Councilor Black asked the Chief if the body cams have arrived and are we using them. The Chief responded that the body cams were just delivered but the other equipment necessary to operate has not been delivered yet. Once the additional equipment arrives,

the vendor along with our IT Director will install them. They hope to be operational by February.

Councilor Sheeman said he was glad to hear that all 5 candidates were accepted by Perf. The Chief said they are planning on swearing in 1 of the candidates at the Councils December 12th plenary meeting. Councilor Sheeman asked the Chief if he knew of any other department that use the F-150's as he is having a hard time visualizing how a prisoner will be placed in the back seat. The Chief said that they actually lowered the vehicle 6 to 8 inches to allow ease of getting into and out of the back seat.

The Chief also extended thanks to Public Works for salting the bridge on Indianapolis Blvd during the recent brief snowfall as the decking had turned to ice making driving a very treacherous. .

Councilor Sheeman then acknowledge Fire Chief Bill Timmer who said the Fire Department has been busy. Just tonight, they were called to Port De Leau as a contractor was painting one of the apartments and the smell of the fumes were causing other tenants to call the fire department. He said that they had their annual Christmas Party for the firefighter's children and a couple of the firefighters decorated a fire truck with lights and put it in the Santa Parade. It took the firefighters 3 or 4 nights to decorate the truck, with Mickey and Minnie Mouse on the back and candy canes on the wiper blades.

Councilor Sheeman then recognized Ed Dabrowski, IT Director who said he was asked by Councilor Zemen to look at the downtown sound system and get it running for the holiday season. He said he was able to get it going with Town Electrician Nick Russo but advised that the system is rather outdated as it was installed maybe 15 years ago. He was surprised it lasted this long. The main components are housed in the fire department. He is waiting on a quote to update. He felt it could be utilized all year and not just at Christmas. For example, during the twi-light parade on the 3rd of July or Easter. He did ask for direction from the Council because in years past, the music wasn't turned on till after the Santa Parade and now it seems Christmas starts right after Halloween.

Councilor Schocke asked about the legality of playing music downtown and not paying the artists. Park Director Alex Brown advised that the Park Department pays 3 organizations to play music throughout the entire Town. Sort of like a license.

Councilor Zemen asked Chief Timmer if he had a chance to look into the resident's complaint about being billed from Superior Ambulance to assist in helping lift his wife back into her chair. Chief Timmer said he has reached out to Superior but he cannot find anywhere in the contract that it states that the ambulance provider (Superior) provides lift assistance at no charge. Superior had told Chief Timmer that because of covid, the law was changed that allows them to bill even if they don't transport.

Attorney Reed raised the concern that senior citizens could be taken advantage of by Superior as seniors have the tendency to pay the bill even when they are not required to pay.

- **Council President Bernie Zemen:** *Town Executive • Chair of the Board of Police Pension Trustees • Liaison to the Tree Board.*

Councilor Zemen began by wishing Councilor Schocke a Happy Birthday. He then asked Building Commissioner Ken Mika what was on the agenda for the upcoming Plan Commission meeting. Ken said at this point, nothing has been filed with his office so most likely the meeting will be cancelled. Councilor Zemen also expressed his thanks to the HCCE and Park Department for a great job in organizing the Santa Parade and tree lighting.

That concluded comments from the Council and President Zemen then turned it over to comments from visitor's or residents, reminding them to limit it to 2 minutes.

Comments from Visitors or Residents:

Terry Steagal, Highland, felt the need for the Sustainability Commission to ensure we protect the environment for future generations. I think it's time for the Council to quit filibustering on issues and get serious on this issue and pass the ordinance. There's not a wall built around Highland and what we do now, affects future generations. Highland did join the Resiliency Commission which comprises of 3 counties and 17 communities. We have the responsibility to protect the environment from greenhouse gases. We need to improve the earth before we destroy ourselves. Just look at the Little Cal and the consent decree Highland had to sign with the federal government. The total project is going to cost Highland, Munster, Hammond, Whiting and Griffith \$185M, of which Highland's portion is \$70M and we don't even know where we were going to find the money. We need to be responsible about our decisions as far as the environment, making sure we're doing the right things and here you have a group, who are wanting to step forward, on a volunteer basis to help out on these issues and make sure we are headed in the right direction for the future and you're debating whether to establish a Sustainability Commission or not. He also commented on the redistricting maps and felt option 1 was closest to what we currently have in place. Option 1 makes the Council more responsible for representing the whole town.

Larry Kondrat, Highland, began by also wishing Councilor Schocke a Happy Birthday. He then referenced sections of the sustainability ordinance asking if he was correct that he was going to be subjected to the whims of a sixth grader. People may laugh but it is a serious question as it is written in your ordinance. In the ordinance that he had, two of the members of the Sustainability Commission would be from middle school or high school or up to 7 years graduated from high school. So, 2 out of 7, makes 40% of the vote. So, I'm supposed to live my life subjected to the whims of a sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh or twelfth grader and they are going to tell me how to live. He said that after the last meeting, one of the members of the sustainability commission was interviewed by the newspaper and said the Council needed to put more teeth into the ordinance and the Council needed to get in line. That seems like the Sustainability Commission is trying to tell me how to live. The word private property appears in the ordinance 3 times. So, a

sixth grader is going to tell me how to live. I don't listen to children as I'm an adult. Actually, I am a free man. I was born free. I don't have to listen to children. They are going to make me eat food that is energy efficient, that is grown somehow without causing damage to the environment. I ask the Council to reject this Ordinance and let us live our own lives. There's tons and tons of silly nonsense in this Ordinance

Connie Wachala said that the person who spoke in front of her and so many others misuse the word bureaucracy. I looked it up and it is an administrative arm of government. The Sustainability Commission wants to be an advisory commission or council and not part of the bureaucracy. I also think the guy in the back row would never cow down to a sixth grader or allowing a sixth grader forcing him to do anything. I also want to say in a crisis that requires evacuation, such as a flood, does Highland have an evacuation plan? She was told Highland did and she asked to be sent a copy. She said the Indiana University Environmental Resilience Institute has several free online tools to help Indiana communities prepare for weather related crises. She said you can plug in the communities' zip code and it will show you their vulnerabilities. The neighborhoods, for example, where you have a higher proportion of low-income residents or renters or non-English speaking speakers are most vulnerable. I live in just such a neighborhood. A few years ago, I had a neighbor who had her water turned off. By the way, I am requesting the Town stop punishing the poor and lower the utility bills excessive late fee. Just yesterday, an elderly woman walking past our house, tripped and fell and couldn't get up. I went to help her. She had fallen on her face and was bleeding profusely from her nose so I called an ambulance. The EMT's came but she was difficult to treat because she was Serbian and didn't speak English. This is an example how the elderly, non-English speaking individuals are vulnerable. In the absence of a Town Manager, the Town needs to have plans in place to handle such crises. The Sustainability Commission could assist in performing that kind of preparation. I'm asking someone from the Council to complete the readiness assessment

Councilor Zemen asked if there were any other comments. Hearing none, he closed comments from the public and brought it back to the Council. He then entered a motion to pay claims.

Payment of Accounts Payable Vouchers. There being no further comments from visitors or residents, Councilor Schocke moved to allow the vendors accounts payable vouchers as filed on the pending accounts payable docket, covering the period **October 26, 2022 through November 15, 2022.** Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The accounts payable vouchers for the vendor docket were allowed, payments allowed in advance were ratified, the payroll dockets listed were ratified and for all remaining invoices, the Clerk-Treasurer was authorized to make payment.

Vendors Accounts Payable Docket:

General Fund, \$216,726.09; Special Events, \$388.79; MVH Fund, \$10,661.07; Donation, \$9.00; Law Enforce Continuing ED, \$436.65; Traffic Violations, \$500.00; Public Safety

**Income Tax, \$23,840.00; Information and Communications Technology Fund, \$8,372.14; Police Pension \$69,827.67; General Improvement, \$25.00; Shared Ethics \$15,986.56; Community Crossing Grant, \$962,174.85;
Total: \$1,308,947.82.**

PAYROLL DOCKET FOR PAYDAY OF NOVEMBER 18, 2022:

OFFICE OF CLERK-TREASURER, \$14,084.84 BUILDING AND INSPECTION DEPARTMENT, \$10,433.44; METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT, \$142,531.85; PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (AGENCY), \$67,812.57; FIRE DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION, 4,846.07; INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT, \$3,745.61; TOTAL PAYROLL: \$243,454.31.

PAYROLL DOCKET FOR PAYDAY OF NOVEMBER 30, 2022:

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS, \$10,489.86 POLICE PENSION, \$68,846.58;

Adjournment of Plenary Meeting. THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS ON THE AGENDA, THE TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT DECLARED THE REGULAR PLENARY MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2022, ADJOURNED AT 7:29 O' CLOCK P.M.

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved by the Town Council at its meeting of December 12, 2022.