

# HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

## STUDY SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY MARCH 18, 2024

The Highland Redevelopment Commission (“Commission”, “RC”) met in person at Town Hall on Monday March 18th, 2024. The Study Session was called to order at 6:02 P.M. by President George Georgeff. Commissioner Turich, excused.

**Roll Call:** Commissioners Phil Scheeringa, George Georgeff, Tom Black, and Alex Robertson were present in person at Town Hall. Doug Turich & Pat Krull.

**Other Officials present:** Attorney John Reed. Director Maria Becerra, Public Works Director, Mark Knesek.

First on the agenda, a presentation by Golden Shovel representative, Warren Wescott. He introduced himself and his company. They only work with Economic Development agencies, cities, counties, regions, EDC’s, redevelopment groups and utilities companies. They had recently done some website work for several Hancock, Steuben Indiana counties and currently working with Bloomington Indiana for their Economic Development Corp., this is more of a combo of the Economic Organization and a Chamber in Wabash County. What we do is more of a custom website work and a communication work. He then shared a few slides. They focus on workforce attraction, business attraction. Group of 37 for a strategy, we meet with our clients monthly. Show a map of the US where they have clients based. Maybe market certain areas, land or properties, GIS planning. They write News related items. President Georgeff, thanked him for the presentation and if they have any questions they would relay them to Maria.

Next, there was a Commercial Grant Application Presentation by Dr. Foreit also introduced his wife Emily. We are applying for the commercial grant application for the Counter Ice Cream shop. The plan is to move the ice cream shop across the street, it will give us significantly more space. Right we have about 400 sq. ft. so its pretty tight. The house across the street has 1100 sq ft with a full basement, it has it’s challenges it’s about 100 years old. We want rehab the inside and the outside, we have a picture of what we want to do. Ideally, it’s going to be the same set up, a walk-up window, ice cream shop, but it will provide more room and long term use the side yard for more seating. Constructed in 1890, 2933 Highway, all seating outside on a deck, it will have a handicap access ramp to the decking, seating facing Highway Ave. and weather proofing like Langels. The old place would be rented out possibly as a hot-dog and soup place. Attorney just confirmed, they are asking for the max grant of \$40,000. President Georgeff said we will take into consideration and get back to them.

Presentation by Mark Knesek and Derek Snyder, NIES engineering. Mark stated that for years they have been talking about upgrading our street lighting to LED for the reason of saving money. I asked Derek to put together a proposal. I would like for you to consider using TIF money to support this project. It will pay for itself in 7 or 8 years. Derek will explain his proposal. Derek explained that any street light that is metal is the responsibility of the Town of Highland to maintain, we own that. The wood poles that’s NIPSCO and they changed those out to LED several years ago. We did an inventory and there are 265 poles, mainly on Kennedy, Cline, 45<sup>th</sup> and Main Street. They have the standard cobra head grey silver finish, except for

Kennedy they have the decorative black finish. So, the intent is to replace those with LED. As part of this, there have been several poles that have been knocked down and some of those were replaced and others have been knocked down. So put back the poles where they should be, on 45<sup>th</sup> by the Fire Station some were capped off, estimated about 20 of those. Also upgrade electric switch coordinate with NIPSCO. Pay back is in about 7 – 8 years. It would get designed, put it out for bid, hopefully build it later in the year. President Georgeff asked for a cost estimate. Derek said in 2022 it was approx. \$300,000, the price has gone up since then. The electric service points and the pull downs have yet to be determined. Overall, you may be looking at \$400,000 to \$450,000 thousand. Commissioner Georgeff, asked Mark to check into NIPSCO, Munster had applied for a grant. Mark said he has not received a response on that at all, I checked with 2 sources. Commissioner Georgeff, said Mike Andrade was working on a grant for Munster in improve their lighting. Commissioner Krull, stated that the School Town of Highland received a rebate when they converted to LED a couple of years ago. Derek said the Redevelopment commission did receive a rebate in the past, but they will definitely check with NIPSCO on that. Attorney Reed asked about the proposal of not to exceed \$34,500 included designing and preparing the bid documents.

Commissioner Krull, one quick point of clarification, some discussion on the School and the Town property taxes. The School gets 24% of their funding from property taxes and that can specifically put into our transportation budget. That helps us pay for the buses that helps us pay the bus drivers and the maintenance and employees for the transportation. So just to say that a significant portion of our budget comes from property taxes.

**Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned by President Georgeff at 6:32 PM.

**DULY PASSED AND RESOLVED** by the Highland Redevelopment Commission, Highland, Lake County, Indiana, this day 8 of April 2024, having passed by a vote 3 in favor and 0 opposed.

Highland Redevelopment Commission

  
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President

ATTEST:

  
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Secretary