



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • JANUARY 2015

NEW E-911 ON HOLD

Interim system will serve as short-term solution for emergencies

Under construction for nearly a year, the call center that will serve as a central dispatch hub for all of Lake County will be delayed at least three months beyond the Jan. 1 deadline.

Details of an interim system – that can function until construction and training is complete – emerged just before Christmas following a flurry of conversations between Fire Chief Bill Timmer, Police Chief Pete Hojnicky, Deputy Commander George Georgeff and E-911 Director Brian Hitchcock.

Highland officials came out of the meetings satisfied the eleventh-hour plan will serve as a short-term bridge and that residents will find the 911 system functioning as it always has.

“We were told to staff our own dispatch center until 11:59 p.m. Dec. 31 and that the county system would take over at midnight,” Timmer said. “In the last few weeks, it became evident that things weren’t going as planned. Over the days leading up to Christmas, where we were

THE 411 ON 911

A delay in opening a countywide E-911 call center will mean that – until further notice – Highland residents will continue using 911 for emergencies and (219) 838-3184 for nonemergencies.

Anyone who has problems accessing the system needs to call Police Chief Hojnicky, Commander Georgeff or Fire Chief Timmer. “Anytime there is change, there is uncertainty,” Fire Chief Bill Timmer said. “Our residents should notice no difference when they call 911. If they do, they need to call us so we can correct the issues.”

meeting nearly every day, the county has come to the table with a plan we believe will protect our community and our residents like our current system always has.”

Notable in the county’s updated plan is a command hierarchy that allow issues to be resolved within minutes, smoothing the transition, and a call chain that provides immediate access to the E-911 director and his leadership. 🐦

ARTS & CULTURAL DISTRICT ON THE HORIZON

The Redevelopment Commission will demolish a few downtown buildings and raise the roof on others as members seek to cement the foundation of an arts and cultural district.

The commission is also eyeing the purchase of several properties in and around downtown.

“We are going to actively seek businesses that have an arts or cultural bent to locate in downtown Highland,” Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro said. “We believe the region is ready to welcome a cultural main street in Northwest Indiana.

“We believe clustering artists and showcasing their work in establishments surrounding a renovated Town Theatre will spur the development of new businesses throughout downtown and north along Kennedy Avenue.”

The commission, working alongside Highland Main Street, will continue to hone the plan to maximize use of downtown retail space and develop opportunities to showcase artists. 🐦

INSIDE: New board and several committees will advance Town Theatre in 2015. **FULL STORY, PAGE 3**

TRAINING SERVICES

Safety Training Services is expanding operations to Highland, creating up to 16 new jobs and retrofitting a dormant building in the process.

The consulting and training firm will invest \$1.33 million in the purchase and renovation of a 18,000-square-foot building on Henry Street.

Indiana-based Safety Training Services will be open for business in February and begin hiring OSHA and workplace safety instructors along with information technology, facilities and industrial rescue personnel in April.

INFO: Visit safetytrainingservices.net to view employment opportunities.

HOUSE UP FOR GRABS ...



This adorable bungalow is free-for-the-asking to anyone who can safely move it to another location. Please call Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro at (219) 972-7598 or email cpetro@highland.in.gov for details.

... TOWN TICKER ...

Members of the **Highland Police Department** and local donors made for a brighter holiday for 66 children who were treated to a shopping spree at the **Highland Meijer** followed by breakfast at **Blue Top Drive-In**. ... **Winners of the 2014 Home Decorating Contest** are:

- ✦ **First Place:** 9121 Idlewild Drive
- ✦ **Second Place:** 3433 41st Place
- ✦ **Third Place:** 3003 100th Street
- ✦ **Best New Entry:** 8127 Robertson
- ✦ **Best Theme:** 3220 41st Street

More winners at highlandparks.org.

CONTRACTOR SIGNS

Beginning Jan. 1, every contractor doing work in Highland must have their vehicles identified on at least two sides with their business name displayed – whether it is their own company or a company that has hired them to do work at town residences or businesses.

The signs must measure at least 12 inches wide by 12 inches tall.

The new regulation was created to assist the Building Department, as well as police officers, in identifying legitimate contractors.

Violators are subject to a \$75 fine.

INFO: highland.in.gov/MunicipalCode for additional ordinances and codes.

CRIME WATCH MEETING

Learn about the latest crime trends at this month's crime watch meeting.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. **JANUARY 14**

WHERE: Highland Library

INFO: Call (219) 838-3184 or email sanderson@highland.in.gov.



WARD 1

BERNIE ZEMEN
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(219) 781-1056



WARD 2

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WARD 3

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WARD 5

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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

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PROJECTS ON TAP FOR 2015

It's only January but the town calendar is already chock full of plans that include expanding existing programs, planning new construction and scheduling a few demolitions. And, that's just for starters:

FACADES AWAY: With nine businesses sporting a hip, mid-century modern look and feel, the Redevelopment Commission is planning to assist additional downtown businesses with a facelift – no Botox required.

WASTEWATER WONDERS: Construction of a wastewater storage tank is on tap for 2015. The Town Council and Sanitary Board plan to meet in January to talk about locations for the 8.5-million-gallon tank. The project is being undertaken at the behest of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to stop wastewater from being discharged into the Little Calumet River during storms. The tank will hold wastewater when the Hammond treatment plant is overwhelmed and release it at a controlled rate.

RAINING REPAIRS: After years of patching one of the main water mains along Kennedy Avenue between Highway and 45th avenues, the Water Board is fast-tracking replacement of the line. Under design for the last eight months, the project will take at least one construction season to complete. Public Works Director John Bach said the project may extend into 2016 but steps are already being taken to minimize disruptions along the mile-long stretch of one of only three north-south arterial routes in town.

FROM COOP TO CAMPUS: Police are expected to move into their new digs before Halloween. Until then, the pace is fast and furious to complete the \$10 million construction project at Cottage Grove Avenue and Ridge Road. There are nearly a dozen companies under contract to complete components of the project – from masonry and concrete to fabricate the shell to electrical and plumbing to get the interior ready for occupancy. When completed, the police station and municipal building will have a campus look and feel.

DIGGING DEEPER: Robots have taken to the underground waterways, completing an in-depth look at the condition of the town's sewers. When the Red Zone 'bots have finished their work, the Sanitary District will have the tools to finish a five-year plan for replacing and relining failing sewers throughout town. Sanitary District Chairman Rex Burton said without the tech marvels, there would be no way to know the condition of the pipes that transport wastewater to the Hammond/Highland border. By March, the town will have information they need to find failing sewers before they collapse.

PARADISE FROM PAVERS: Completing the urban greenspace at 45th Avenue and Fifth Street will depend on the generosity of folks who donate \$100 to \$200 to buy a paving brick. So far, donations are falling short of the need but backers are hopeful the community will open their collective wallets and help finish the project.

COUNCIL SEEKS BOARD, COMMISSION MEMBERS

The Town Council is looking for community-minded individuals who would like to serve on a board or commission for 2015 and beyond.

"We have several openings we would like to get filled as soon as possible," Council President Dan Vassar said. "This is an exciting time in Highland. We are looking for energetic individuals who want to give a few hours a month to help shape our town's future."

In addition, the council is hoping to add a number of members to the Council of Community Events and Highland Main Street.

"Citizen involvement is invaluable to making Highland the great town that it is," he said.

HOW TO APPLY

To be considered, residents must file an application – available at highland.in.gov – with the Clerk-Treasurer's office, located inside Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road.

Open positions include seats on the following:

- Plan Commission
- Parks & Recreation
- Redevelopment
- Waterworks Board
- Sanitary Board
- Police Commission
- Board of Zoning Appeals
- Highland Main Street
- Community Events Commission

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

Town leaders will begin 2015 on a high note. A large group of Town Theatre enthusiasts is charging forward with plans to put the historic structure back on the map. A core group of seven individuals will be joined by two members of the Town Council and a pair of longtime lawyers at an inaugural meeting in January to advance plans for a substantial restoration/rehabilitation of the vintage theatre.

BOARD MEMBERS

Keith Bruxvoort: Vice President of Finance, Strack & Van Til

Robin Carlascio: Partner/Owner The Idea Factory, Dunes National Park Association Treasurer

Bridget DeYoung: Redevelopment Commission/Highland Main Street

Dan Dunn: Communications Professor, Purdue Calumet

Michael Griffin: Town of Highland Clerk-Treasurer

Bruce Leep: Chairman Provision Theatre Company, professor at Trinity College.

Michael Maloney: Former chairman of Highland Redevelopment

Town Council Representatives: Dan Vassar and Bernie Zemen

Legal Team: Rhett Tauber and Carol Green-Fraley

FUND-RAISER

THE TOMFOOLERY SHOW

This one-of-a-kind variety show features the hilarious antics of comedians Gia Claire, Lucky Luciano and Jay Washington and the Planetary Blues Band. All proceeds go directly to the Town Theatre project.

WHEN: 8 p.m. February 20. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Wicker Social Center
TICKETS: \$25 online at www.tomfooleryfunclub.com or at Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road.

DID YOU KNOW?

Partners in Preservation is donating funds to help the Town become part of the National Register of Historic Places.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Highland Main Street is looking for volunteers to work on the Town, as well as other initiatives to create an arts and theatre district.

If you're interested in volunteering, email Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro at cpetro@highland.in.gov or please call (219) 972-7598.

COMMITTEES

Residents who have a hankering to help the Town Theatre get up and running are encouraged to check out a bevy of new committees. Some groups will aid in restoration while others will target post-construction operations.

FUND-RAISING

Spearheads events and projects that generate immediate and long-term dollars to rehab and run the theatre.

MEMBERSHIP

Develops and launches a "Friends of the Theatre" program to cultivate interest and raise funds.

PUBLICITY & MARKETING

Creates social media opportunities to increase awareness of events relevant to the theatre.

VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT

Supports every committee by tapping into the talents of local individuals and groups.

PROGRAMMING

Develops theatre performances that cater to the region and its interests.

OPERATIONS

Provides the technical expertise necessary to operate projection equipment.

MAINTENANCE

Provides general upkeep both inside and outside the building.



INDOOR STREET MARKET

Escape the cold and stop indoors for your favorite breads, cheeses, honey, cupcakes, spices, pet treats and more.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. **JAN. 10.** The market continues on the second Saturday of the month through May.

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

VENDORS: Please call the park office to inquire about booth space this winter.

INFO: highlandparks.org or (219) 838-0114.

SPECIAL NEEDS CARNIVAL

Parks and Recreation will host a winter carnival for individuals of all ages who have special needs and abilities. Highland has joined forces with Crown Point, Dyer, Hammond, Lake County, Merrillville, Munster, Schererville, St. John and Whiting parks as well as other local organizations to sponsor functions for those with special needs. The January carnival will feature a bounce castle, volleyball, crafts, table tennis, bingo and more.

WHEN: 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, **JAN. 25**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

INFO: highlandparks.org or (219) 838-0114.

YOUTH OPEN DODGEBALL

This after-school program features open play dodgeball with foam balls. An instructor will be on hand to explain the rules of the game, form teams, and help officiate matches.

AGES: 7 - 14

WHEN: 4-5 p.m. Wednesdays, **JAN. 14 - FEB. 18**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

FEE: \$25 residents / \$30 nonresidents

ACTIVITY CODE: 114001

INFO: highlandparks.org or (219) 838-0114.

TEAM TOTAL FITNESS

Work out with a certified personal trainer to lead you through this progressive program that focuses on body composition, overall health and conditioning. Great group training for all fitness levels, including beginners.

AGES: 14 and older

WHEN: 7 to 7:55 p.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays; 9 to 9:55 a.m. Saturdays

WHERE: Lincoln Center Aerobics Room

SESSION 1: February 3 to 28

SESSION 2: March 3 to 28

3X/WEEK: \$75 residents / \$84 nonresidents

2X/WEEK: \$50 residents / \$56 nonresidents

1X/WEEK: \$25 residents / \$28 nonresidents

DROP-IN: \$10 residents / \$12 nonresidents

ACTIVITY CODE: 300034

INFO: highlandparks.org or (219) 838-0114.

NO FITNESS INITIATION FEE

Join the Lincoln Community Fitness Center through **JANUARY 19** and pay no initiation fee. That's a savings of \$30 to \$45. Personal training is also available at an additional, but very affordable, fee.

INFO: highlandparks.org or (219) 838-0114.

PLAY BALL!

LITTLE LEAGUE

Boys and girls can register now for the following Little League divisions: T-Ball, Rookie, Minor B, Minor A, Majors.

LEAGUE AGES: 4 to 12

WHEN: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. **JAN. 24,**

FEB. 7 and 21, MARCH 7

WHERE: Lincoln Center

NOTE: Players **MUST** turn 4 by December 31, 2015 and reside or go to school in Highland. Birth certificate and proof of residency are required at registration.

REGISTRATION: Forms available online at www.highlandll.com.

INFO: Call HLL President Bob Johnsen at (219) 718-1236 or email info@highlandll.com.



SOCCER CLUB

Spring registration starts in January each year and must be closed by early February in order for teams to be created and declared to our regional governing body, the Northwest Indiana Soccer League.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to noon **JAN. 10**
9 a.m. to 2 p.m. **JAN. 17 and 24**

WHERE: Lincoln Center

TRAVEL TEAMS: All players must provide a wallet-sized picture. New players must show proof of age and purchase a uniform — jersey, shorts, socks — from the club.

IN-HOUSE TEAMS: The in-house league consists of players ages 4 through 8. It does not promote competition and no statistics or game scores are kept. All players receive trophies for their effort and participation.

INFO: Visit www.highlandsoccer.org.

GIRLS SOFTBALL

Spring and summer sports seasons are just a few short months away and sign-ups are scheduled for the following age divisions: 8U, 10U, 12U, 14U and 18U.

WHEN: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. **FEB. 7, 21**
and 6:30 to 8 p.m. **MARCH 4**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

REGISTRATION FEE: \$70 includes a game jersey, tournament shirt and yard sign. There is a \$20 raffle ticket fee, reimbursable by selling tickets.

NOTE: Shorts, visors, and socks are additional and may be purchased at registration. All equipment is provided by the league except for a required glove. Rubber spikes are recommended, but not required.

INFO: Visit highlandgirlssoftball.com.

BABE RUTH

It's time to register for the new Highland Babe Ruth and Travel League for the following divisions: Babe Ruth and Senior League.

BABE RUTH: Ages 13 to 15

SENIOR LEAGUE: Ages 16 to 19

WHEN: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. **JAN. 24**
and **FEB. 7 and 21.**

WHERE: Lincoln Center

NOTE: Players **MUST** turn 13 by April 30, 2015 or 19 after December 31, 2014 and reside in Highland. Birth certificate and proof of residency are required at registration.

INFO: Call Babe Ruth League President Dan Vassar at (219) 924-1945 or e-mail highlandbaberuth@yahoo.com.

