

**Enrolled Minutes of the Twenty-Third Regular or Special Meeting
For the Twenty-Ninth Highland Town Council
Regular Plenary Meeting (Electronic and in person)
Monday, November 09, 2020**

The Twenty-Ninth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met in its regular plenary session on Monday, November 09, 2020 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 an *electronic meeting*, pursuant to Governor Holcomb's Executive Order 20-04 and 20-09, an extended by Executive Order 20-44, allowing such meetings pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-3.6 for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency. All persons met remotely on a Zoom platform that allowed for real time interaction, and supported the public's ability to observe and record the proceedings. When the agenda item provided for public comment, this was supported as well. All members of the Town Council participated in person, except Councilor Bernie Zemen, who participated electronically. The remaining town councilors were present on the premises of the plenary meeting room.

The Town Council President, Mark J. Schocke presided. The Town Clerk-Treasurer, Michael W. Griffin, was present to memorialize the proceedings. The meeting was opened with Councilor Thomas Black leading in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Roll Call: Present on roll call were Councilors Bernie Zemen (electronically), Mark Herak, Mark J. Schocke, Thomas Black and Roger Sheeman. The Clerk-Treasurer, Michael W. Griffin was present to memorialize the proceedings. A quorum was attained.

Additional Officials Present: (all electronically) Scott Bilse, Attorney; William R. Timmer, Jr., CFOD, Fire Chief; Mark Knesek, Public Works Director; Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Redevelopment Director; Kenneth J. Mika, Building Commissioner, and Pete Hojnicky, Police Chief (in person) were present.

Also present: Larry Kondrat, and Ed Dabrowski of the Board of Waterworks Directors; Robyn Radford of the Redevelopment Commission (electronically); and Ed Dabrowski as IT (Contract) Director (electronically) were also present.

Guests: Theresa Badovich of the Idea Factory was also present (electronically).

Minutes of the Previous Meetings: The minutes of the regular meeting of October 26, 2020 were submitted for consideration. Councilor Black moved the approval of the minutes. Councilor Sheeman seconded.

Upon the motion to adopt, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. The minutes of the regular meeting of October 26, 2020 were approved.

Special Order:

1. **Executive Proclamation:** A Proclamation Recognizing Saturday, November 21, 2020 as Child Adoption Day in Highland.

The Clerk-Treasurer read the proclamation aloud. The Town Council President adopted the proclamation and affixed his signature.

TOWN OF HIGHLAND
PROCLAMATION OF the TOWN EXECUTIVE

A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2020 AS CHILD ADOPTION DAY IN HIGHLAND

- Whereas,** Highland, Indiana recognizes the importance of giving children permanent, safe and loving families through adoption; and,
- Whereas,** More than 123,000 children in the United States foster care system are waiting to be adopted; and,
- Whereas,** More than 30,000 children in the State of Indiana are waiting for permanent families; and,
- Whereas,** To help find forever families for these children, the local courts of Lake County continue to process, and to finalize the adoptions of local children and encourage other organizations to celebrate all adoptions; and,
- Whereas,** This effort, along with similar celebrations in all 50 states will offer children the chance to live with stable and loving families and encourage other dedicated individuals to make a powerful difference in the lives of a child through foster care adoption,

Now, Therefore, I, Mark J. Schocke, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, now hereby proclaim and designate **Saturday, November 21, 2020**, as **CHILD ADOPTION DAY** in the Town of Highland;

Be it Further Proclaimed, That , I urge all citizens to join in a national effort to raise awareness about the importance of foster care adoption.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Corporate Seal to be affixed at the Highland Municipal Building this 9th day of November in the year 2020.

TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA
BY ITS TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Mark J. Schocke

Attest:

Michael W. Griffin, Clerk-Treasurer

(Print optimized at 80%)

Communications:

1. The final report from the Complete Count Committee of the Town of Highland for the meeting of November 09, 2020 was acknowledged.

HIGHLAND 2020 CENSUS COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT

With the 2020 Census now completed, I want to provide Town officials with a summary overview of the activities undertaken by Highland's 2020 Census Complete Count Committee (Highland CCC).

As you know, the Census is mandated in the US Constitution in Article 1, Section 2, which reads in part: "...The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct..." The Census information is used for several purposes, including Congressional apportionment and distribution billions of dollars in federal, state and local funding. Therefore, a complete, accurate count of Highland residents was critical.

On December 10, 2018, the Highland Town Council passed Resolution 2018-50, establishing a "Complete Count Committee" for the 2020 Census. The past and present Highland CCC members include: Victor Garcia, a member of the Highland School Board; Mary Luptak, Executive Director of the Highland Griffith Chamber of Commerce; Linda Johnsen and Jane Gibson, the past and present Branch Managers of the Highland Branch of the Lake County Public Library; Tim Huizenga, of Faith Church in Highland; Rich Underkofler, Past Recruiting Assistant working in NW Indiana with the US Census Bureau; Erin Stojic and Kelli Strbjak, the former and present Highland Deputy Clerk-Treasurers; and Redevelopment Commission Assistant Lance Ryskamp.

During 2019, the US Census Bureau, locally through the Chicago Regional Office, had the primary focus of assisting in the formation of Complete Count Committees and recruiting local residents who wish to work on the 2020 Census. The Highland CCC promoted those job opportunities through its established social media outlets on Facebook (Highland IN 2020 Census), Twitter (@HighlandCensus) and Instagram (@highlandcensus2020). Additionally, Highland CCC initiated its own outreach, emailing a letter to Highland businesses, churches and nonprofits on April 1, 2019. (Attachment 1)

During the balance of 2019, Highland CCC continued to promote job recruitment, as well as developed an Action Plan, which was presented to the Highland Town Council in December, 2019. (Attachment 2). The Plan encompassed two major objectives: to raise awareness and encourage universal participation by Highland residents; and, secondly, to assist in providing internet access to Highland residents to help encourage filling out the census questionnaire online. The 2020 Census was the first Census where online self-response was not only permitted, but strongly encouraged.

Beginning in January, 2020, the US Census Bureau began a massive, nationwide promotional campaign to raise awareness and encourage participation in the Census. At the same time, the Highland CCC began executing its Action Plan and community outreach at the local level with emails and social media posts. Highland also networked with other Lake County Complete Count Committees through Legacy Foundation, who took a lead role in coordinating at the county level, as well as the NWI representatives of the US Census Bureau.

Through a variety of outreach activities (Attachment 3), our committee coordinated its efforts with the School Town of Highland, the Highland Branch of the LC Public Library, the Highland Griffith Chamber and Highland civic and faith-based groups toward various events to be held around Census Day on April 1, 2020. Those activities included setting up a computer kiosk at Lincoln Center, promotion of the Census at the Chamber's "Breakfast With the Easter Bunny", daily access to computers by the public at the Highland Library and the School Town of Highland's student/family public access to school iPads for online Census response.

All of these outreach events, as well as the planned April outreach to tenants at the Hampton-In-Highland apartment complex, had to be abandoned after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though the apartment outreach through the complex management's newsletter was eventually able to be done in June, these cancellations and the ongoing pandemic hindered the Highland CCC's efforts in the beginning months of census response. Ultimately as a result of the pandemic, the US Census Bureau extended response time from mid-summer to October 31st. The end date for Census response was later shortened to October 15th, as a result of a decision by the US Supreme Court.

The committee then pivoted more heavily toward social media postings, in coordination with other town departments (Parks & Recreation and the Police Department were particularly helpful), and other partner organizations, such as the Chamber and the Highland Community Foundation. In addition, email outreach, Gazebo Express articles, postings on electronic signs, and messages on monthly water bills were actively used. The Highland CCC maintained contacts and shared information and content with Legacy, local Census personnel, and state agencies such as the Indiana CCC, Indiana State Library and the Indiana Data Center. As a result, despite the numerous COVID-related cancellations, many of the Action Plan items were able to be achieved.

Once response to the Census began, the critical metric and objective was to get as many Highland residents to self-respond as possible. This self-response initially was an online response, but later included self-response by phone and through mailed in questionnaires. Self-response was important, as these were known responses, providing the most accurate count information available. The higher the self-response rate, the smaller number of households would require in-person visits by Census personnel. This also reduced the chance of an undercount of residents who, for whatever reason, were unable to be contacted and counted by in-person Census visits. The US Census Bureau maintained ongoing self-response rate data down to the Census tract level and updated it daily, which was very helpful in monitoring the town's progress.

In the end, Highland's self-response rate outperformed the 2010 results, not only town-wide but in five of the town's six Census tracts. A map of the six Census tracts is attached. (Attachment 4) Highland's self-response rate was the 20th best among Indiana's 566 cities and towns. The only tract which did not reach the 2010 level was Tract #405.01, which contains apartment complexes such as Hampton-In-Highland and Embassy Place. Unfortunately, outreach to this area was likely the most greatly affected by the COVID shutdown, which prevented an earlier, more hands-on effort onsite to increase awareness. Highland's self-response stats, along with comparison to other communities in Lake County are attached. (Attachment 5).

As I noted in my final staff report, with home visits by Census workers added in, the Census Bureau reported that within the Lake County Area Census Office (ACO), which encompasses more of the State than Lake County, there was 99.9% total enumeration rate. The State of Indiana as a whole was also considered to have a 99.9% enumeration rate. The types of methodology that have been used to reach this level is explained in the attached press release from the US Census Bureau. (Attachment 6) This level of detail regarding total enumeration rates was not available down to the local level.

What all of this translates out to, in terms of total population change, we will have to wait and see later this year and into 2021. For those of you who would like to get updates on the Census Bureau's final results, here is a link to sign up for that: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCENSUS/signup/11626>.

Respectfully submitted,
Lance Ryskamp- Co-Chair
Highland 2020 Census Complete Count Committee

Attachments and balance of report on file.

Staff Reports: The following staff reports were received and filed.

• **Building & Inspection Report for October 2020**

Permit Type	Number	Residential	Commercial	Est. Cost	Fees
Commercial Buildings:	0	0	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Commercial Additions or Remodeling:	5	0	5	\$132,801.00	\$3,313.50
Signs:	2	0	2	\$4,152.00	\$802.50
Single Family:	0	0	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Duplex/Condo:	0	0	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Residential Additions:	0	0	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Residential Remodeling:	90	90	0	\$744,195.00	\$18,028.50
Garages:	0	0	0	0.00	0.00
Sheds:	3	3	0	\$7,149.00	\$550.50
Decks & Porches:	5	5	0	\$20,082.00	\$1,432.50
Fences:	11	11	0	\$51,515.00	\$1,930.50
Swimming Pools:	1	1	0		\$108.00
DrainTile/ Waterproofing:	7	7	0	\$98,213.00	\$2,307.00
Miscellaneous	16	15	1	\$61,099.00	\$2,568.00
TOTAL:	140	132	8	\$1,119,206.00	\$31,041.00
Electrical Permits	14	11	3		\$1,533.00
Mechanical Permits	12	09	3		\$1,404.00
Plumbing Permits	9	7	2		\$1,719.10
Water Meters	1	0	1		\$940.00
Water Taps	1	0	1		\$330.00
Sewer/Storm Taps	0	0	0		\$0.00
TOTAL Plumbing:	11	7	4		\$2,989.10

October Code Enforcement:

Investigations: 075
Citations: 005
Warnings: 075

October Inspections:

Building: 52 Electrical: 16 Plumbing: 12 HVAC: 13
Electrical Exam: 1

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT for OCTOBER 2020

<u>Type of Calls</u>	<u>October 2020</u>	<u>YTD</u>
General Alarms	10	94
Paid Still Alarms	37	291
Still Alarms	4	53
Total Calls:	Month: 51	438

• Workplace Safety Report for October 2020

There was one workplace incident to report in October. The following report was filed.

Department	Injuries this Month	Year to Date 2020	Total in 2019	Restricted Days 2020	Lost Workdays This Year (2020)	Restricted Days Last Year (2019)	Lost Workdays Last Year (2019)
Parks	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Fire	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Police	0	1	4	0	0	0	0
Street	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Water & Sewer	1	2	5	32	81	0	0
Maint.	0	0	1	0	0	14	2
Other	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	1	5	13	32	81	14	2

Effective January 1, 2002, OSHA changed the record keeping guidelines. The municipality now counts the number of days lost from the day after the injury until the employee returns to work. Weekend, holidays, vacation days or other days scheduled off are included in the lost days count to a maximum of 180 days.

Remarks from the Town Council:
(For the Good of the Order)

- **Councilor Bernie Zemen:** • *Fire Department, Liaison* • *Liaison to the Plan Commission*

Councilor Zemen acknowledged the Highland Fire Chief who offered a cursory survey of activity of the Fire Department particularly involving a call to Gary for brush fires.

With leave from the Town Council, there was a colloquy between Councilor Sheeman, the Fire Chief and the Clerk-Treasurer regarding the status of the CARES Act reimbursement. The Town of Highland was eligible for a grant of \$726,156. It was noted that the Clerk-Treasurer Office working with the Fire Chief filed with Lake County Community Development Department for its allocation of HUD based CARES money.

The discussion noted that there was a meeting with department heads scheduled for Thursday to discuss the application for the CARES Act funds.

- **Councilor Mark Herak:** • *Budget and Finance Chair* • *Liaison to the Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals* • *Town Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners, Liaison.*

Councilor Herak expressed condolences to the Oakley Family on the passing of Elaine Oakley, wife of the former Council member John Oakley and to the family of former Highland Police Detective and former Dyer Police Chief Richard Quinn on the passing of his wife Carmen.

Councilor Herak congratulated all the recently successful candidates who were elected in the recent General Election.

Councilor Herak acknowledged the Police Chief, who reported on a joint fundraiser undertaken to support "Toys for Tots" and "Shop with a Cop".

Councilor Herak acknowledged the Building Commissioner, who reported on matters pending before the Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals as well as survey of inspection activity.

Councilor Herak acknowledged the Public Works Director, who reported on the leaf collection and offered survey on activities in the Public Works Department.

- **Councilor Tom Black:** *Liaison to the Board of Sanitary Commissioners • Liaison to the Board of Waterworks Directors.*

Councilor Black acknowledged the Redevelopment Director, who reported on the change of ownership for Highland Volkswagen, Indianapolis Boulevard and other the statue of the Downtown Redevelopment Project at the parking lot located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Highway Avenue and Kennedy Avenue.

It was further noted that the Redevelopment Director had obtained a \$40,000 grant to support the replacement of lamps in the downtown.

- **Councilor Roger Sheeman:** *Chamber of Commerce Liaison • Liaison to the Community Events Commission • Information Technology Liaison • and Redevelopment Commission Liaison.*

Councilor Sheeman commended the Public Works Director on receiving the Indiana Public Employees (risk) Pool (IPEP) Sponsored safety grant in the amount of \$10,000. It was noted that the Police Department was awarded a safety grant as well for personal protection equipment.

Councilor Sheeman also acknowledged the Redevelopment Director who further reported on the Second Downtown Restaurant Crawl. Councilor Sheeman suggested somehow encouraging a common period of opening for all the participating restaurants.

- **Councilor President Mark Schocke:** *Town Executive • Chair of the Board of Police Pension Trustees • Park and Recreation Liaison.*

The Town Council President acknowledged the Building Commissioner asking him to clarify whether the Senior Housing Developer will have a matter before the Plan Commission. It was noted that the developer would be present to request a public hearing on its rezoning. In the course of a colloquy between the Town Council President and the Building Commissioner it was noted that there was no public hearing on the senior matter. However, comment could occur during the usual place in the meeting for public comment.

Town Council President Schocke noted that the Park and Recreation Superintendent could not be present for the meeting. He did report that the annual Daughters of the American Revolution organized a Veterans Day ceremony at Main Square, for

Wednesday, November 11, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. Congressman-elect and North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan and Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin were the featured speakers.

The Town Council President also commended the candidates who stood for office in the recent General Election.

Comments from Visitors or Residents: (In person and electronically)

1. Larry Kondrat, Highland, asked about an advertised sale of property by the Redevelopment Department. It was noted that it was the former Bult Oil Property.

Mr. Kondrat, noted that the Senior Housing developer had taken steps to seek another vote of the plan commission for rezoning owing to the incomplete legal notice that was used in the initial petition. Mr. Kondrat asked whether the ordinance adopting the rezoning was then nullified or rescinded. Mr. Kondrat stated that he believed it should be rescinded.

With the leave of the Town Council, Councilor Herak and the Town Council President debated whether the original zoning was rescinded by the reapplication to rezone the entire parcel. Mr. Bilse, standing in for the Town Attorney, indicated that he would need to study the matter before he could offer an opinion.

Mr. Kondrat, questioned Councilor Sheeman regarding his attendance at a meeting between the Senior Housing Developer and Ken Scheeringa, a portion of whose property was required to construct a public road according to the required state specifications in the current private access road commonly known as "Ernie Strack Drive." Mr. Kondrat characterized the meeting as a negotiation. Councilor Sheeman characterized his present as being only to observe.

With leave from the Town Council, Councilor Herak indicated that he had reviewed the matter and that Cardinal Campus, a redevelopment project on Main Street, had paid its taxes for 2020 but that it was paid according to the extension granted by the Governor owing to the COVID Pandemic. A colloquy ensued regarding the Cardinal Campus Allocation Area, between Councilor Herak, the Town Council President and Mr. Kondrat.

2. Brandon Dothrager, Highland (electronically), referenced what he called a Purdue Study involving tax shift and allocations areas.

Mr. Dothrager asked Councilor Sheeman about remarks attributed to the Councilor in a November 2019 Post Tribune article and whether those remarks were consistent with the proposed Senior housing development.

Mr. Dothrager impugned Councilor Sheeman's honesty, inquired whether a referendum could be used regarding whether the Senior Housing development should proceed.

With leave from the Town Council, Councilor Herak and Mr. Dothrager had a colloquy regarding the public support for the Senior Housing Development.

3. Janille Scheeringa, Highland, inquired whether the November 18th Plan Commission meeting would be conducted on Zoom. It was noted that any public hearing on the proposed rezoning, if a hearing was granted at the November meeting, would take place on December 16.

Payment of Accounts Payable Vouchers. There being no further comments from the public, Councilor Black moved to allow the vendors accounts payable vouchers as filed on the pending accounts payable docket, covering the period October 27, 2020 through

November 09, 2020 as well as to ratify the payroll dockets for the paydays of October 9, 2020 and October 23, 2020. Councilor Sheeman seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four affirmatives and no negatives. Councilor Zemen did not respond to the roll call. The motion passed. The accounts payable vouchers for the vendor docket were allowed, payroll dockets and other payments allowed in advance were ratified, and for all remaining invoices, the Clerk-Treasurer was authorized to make payment.

Vendors Accounts Payable Docket:

General Fund, \$405,388.11; Motor Vehicle Highway and Street (MVH) Fund, \$17,416.35; Local Road and Streets Fund, \$10,049.76; Law Enforcement Continuing Education and Training and Supply Fund, \$3,956.73; Flexible Spending Accounts Agency Fund, \$619.20; Insurance Premium Agency Fund, \$195,990.09; Information Communications Technology Fund, \$6,200.69; Civil Donation Fund, \$128.97; Rainy Day Fund, \$200,000; Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund, \$45,082.21; Gaming Revenue Sharing Fund, \$25,363.48; Community Crossings Grant Fund, \$1,042,537.40; Public Safety Local Income Tax Fund, \$270.00; Police Pension Fund, 469,229.50; Total: \$2,022,232.49.

Payroll Docket for payday of October 09, 2020:

Council, Boards and Commissions, \$0.00; Office of Clerk-Treasurer, \$16,635.90; Building and Inspection Department, \$8,806.51; Metropolitan Police Department, \$121,821.17; Fire Department, \$3,836.36; Public Works Department (Agency), \$62,029.76 and 1925 Police Pension Plan Pension Fund, \$0.00; Total Payroll: \$212,129.70.

Payroll Docket for payday of October 23, 2020:

Council, Boards and Commissions, \$8,418.56; Office of Clerk-Treasurer, \$15,627.98; Building and Inspection Department, \$8,904.81; Metropolitan Police Department, \$111,924.86; Fire Department, \$37,554.11; Public Works Department (Agency), \$64,465.39 and 1925 Police Pension Plan Pension Fund, \$69,121.85; Total Payroll: \$316,017.56.

Adjournment of Plenary Meeting. Councilor Black moved that the plenary meeting electronically convened be adjourned. Councilor Herak seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four affirmatives, no negatives with Councilor Zemen not responding. The regular plenary meeting, convened electronically, of the Town Council for Monday, November 09, 2020 was adjourned at 7:45 O'clock p.m.

Michael W. Griffin, IAMC/MMC/CPFA/ACPFIM/CMO
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved by the Town Council at its meeting of _____, 2020.

Michael W. Griffin, IAMC/MMC/CPFA/ACPFIM/CMO
Clerk-Treasurer