

**HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2022**

Members of the Highland Redevelopment Commission (“RC”, “Commission”) met in person at the Highland Municipal Building on Tuesday, July 26, 2022. The study session was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Commission President Pro Tem George Georgeff.

Minutes were prepared by Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Redevelopment Director and Recording Secretary.

Roll Call: Commissioners present in person included George Georgeff, Cy Huerter, Bill Leep and Alex Robertson. Commissioner Sean Conley was absent. A quorum was established.

Additional Officials Present: Pat Krull, School Town of Highland Representative and non-voting member to the Redevelopment Commission; John Reed, Abrahamson, Reed and Bilse; Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Highland Redevelopment Director were present in person

Also Present in Person: None

Before beginning review and discussion of the posted agenda, Director DeGuilio-Fox took a few minutes to thank Commissioner Alex Robertson who graciously stepped in to recreate the Downtown Restaurant Crawl menu when Ms. DeGuilio-Fox and the IT Director had a difficult time editing the existing menu as found on the assistant’s computer. And, she thanked him for collecting giveaways from the Crawl restaurateurs and delivering them to the South Shore Convention & Visitors Authority when they requested them for a Rail Cats game where they planned to advertise the Highland Restaurant Crawl.

General Substance of the Discussion

1. Director and Assistant Positions Update:

- a. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox asked if the commissioners had received the recent resumes she’d sent them from the second INDEED listing for the director position that she’d posted. Those present advised they had received and reviewed them. Discussion ensued in regard to the two resumes of particular interest to the Commissioners. The Commissioners asked Ms. DeGuilio-Fox to schedule and advertise an Executive Session for Thursday, August 4th at 6:00 PM so that two candidates could be interviewed.
- b. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox also shared with the Commissioners the telephone call wherein Commissioner Conley shared with her the outcome of the telephone conversation with Mr. Chambers, the proposed assistant candidate. John Reed also commented in regard to the conversation outcome. Discussion ensued. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox also reported Sean’s comment about paying the assistant a higher salary. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised that to accomplish that the Commissioners would have to request an additional appropriation from the Council and prepare and adopt a new salary resolution/ordinance. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox suggested that if the Commission decides to pursue a higher salary for the assistant they may want to first lobby Council members in order to be certain there are enough votes to get the council on board. Discussion ensued.
- c. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox inquired as to whether to allow the INDEED posting to continue to run. Commissioner Leep thought it should be stopped and commented that he believes the best, most worthwhile resumes come in early on. Discussion ensued.

2. **Marketing Video Update:** Director DeGuilio-Fox asked Commissioner Alex Robertson if he would provide an update as to the status of the Marketing Video project. Commissioner Robertson

commented that the group he mentioned previously, the group who had created the video advertising for Fuzzyline Brewery, is preparing a proposal to present to the Commissioners.

3. **Supplement to the Highland Municipal Code Section 214.180: RD-Redevelopment District:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox referred the Commissioners to their packet and commented that the copy of the supplement is the second they've received so to please hang on to it and use it as a working copy. She also asked if any of them had reviewed the comments from Chester, Inc that she sent along with the supplement advising that she'd found them to be confusing because they did not reference the same sections as in the supplement. Commissioner Huerter advised he'd taken a quick look but not studied the comments or supplement. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox suggested they all thoroughly review the supplement should they want to pursue updating the document.
4. **Wayfinding Sign Project:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised she had reached out to VIA marketing. They are working on the design and asked if the Explore Highland Downtown logo and background appealed to the Commissioners for the downtown parking lot wayfinding sign with the QR code. The Commissioners were shown the logo and design colors as are currently used on the mural map mounted on the depot. She also referenced this as the logo and design used on the business banners that had been purchased by the business owners prior to the Hometown Heroes banners now used on the downtown street light poles. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox asked that Commissioners let her know if this is not their preference. She went on to advise that IT Director, Ed Dabrowski, had advised that it would cost about \$60/year to own and register a QR code and would require a credit card to begin the process. Commissioner Huerter asked if the IT Director would confirm this is required of municipalities. Commissioner Leep asked if a VISA Gift Card could be used. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox was directed to ask the IT director to check into these questions. Discussion ensued and Ms. DeGuilio-Fox was directed to look into all options. She went on to report that the IT director also advised it would cost between \$300-\$500 to create and register a website domain. All agreed that the projected cost sounded reasonable. Commissioner Leep suggested adding links for the businesses in town so that visitors to the site could use a link to get to the businesses' websites for service hours or a menu, etc. STOH representative, Pat Krull, mentioned that an individual from the Highland Soccer Club created a website and QR code on his own for the club and that he is not a "tech" guy. Discussion ensued. Cy suggested Pat speak with Ed about the website and QR code. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox also mentioned she'd found a 2008 chamber of commerce brochure that has a map of the downtown on the inside. She advised she contacted the new Highland-Griffith Chamber executive director and asked if he would allow Redevelopment to use the map. He reportedly responded that as soon as the chamber's annual golf outing is over he will check into it and get back to redevelopment.
5. **Town Theatre Items:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox reported that there will be a story in the Gazebo Express about the theatre items for sale. She passed around the draft version of the story as received from the Idea Factory. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox asked what the commissioners would like to charge for each item so she has an idea of what to advise callers. Commissioner Georgeff suggested the Gazebo Express article state that sealed offers be submitted to the Redevelopment office. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox asked Attorney Reed if that would require a specific public notice or disclosure. He advised it would not, not for surplus such as the items from the former Town Theatre. Discussion ensued. STOH representative, Pat Krull, suggested if the current efforts don't work perhaps the commission would want to contact Kraft Auction in Valparaiso. Further discussion will be pursued if the Gazebo Express article does not entice buyers.
6. **Welcome to Downtown Highland Sign:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox thanked Commissioners Alex Robertson and George Georgeff for offering their opinion of the newly installed sign and how it looks after dark when the LED lighting turns on. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised that payment for the project is on their payables docket to be approved during their plenary session so if there are any complaints

or concerns they should take them into consideration. No concerns or complaints were identified.

7. **Electric Vehicle Chargers – PlugShare Registration:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised the commissioners that she had registered the Highland EV chargers on the PlugShare website so travelers can find the downtown location on their map. She provided the web address and showed the commissioners the site page for future reference.
8. **Commercial Property Improvement Grant – 45th Street Partners:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox reported her follow-up conversation with Jim Lyons in regard to the Commercial Property Improvement Grant project grant awarded August 2021 and due for completion by the end of August 2022. She advised the commissioners that the project is due for completion on time as reported by Jim Lyons. She continued that once the project is completed receipts and paperwork will be submitted and reviewed for reimbursement. Discussion ensued after comments from certain of the commissioners that they had driven by the project and questioned the painted brick and other color choices. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised she believes the work is exactly what was approved and would pull the original application and design materials for the commissioners review at their next meeting.
9. **Redevelopment Commission Comments:** No comments were added.

There being no further discussion the Redevelopment Commission study session was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Recording Secretary.