

# HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

## STUDY SESSION MINUTES

TUESDAY, MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2023

Members of the Highland Redevelopment Commission (RC Commission) met in person at Town Hall on Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

The Study session was called to order at 6:33 pm by President Sean Conley.

**Present:** Commissioners Sean Conley, Bill Leep, Alex Robertson, and Town Council President Tom Black were present in person at Town Hall.

Commissioner George Georgeff was excused.

**Additional Officials Present:** Maria Becerra, Redevelopment Director; Susan Hale, Assistant Redevelopment Director; John Reed, Attorney

Pat Krull, Non-Voting Commissioner & School Town Representative was absent.

**Also Present:** None

### General Substance and Discussion

1. Wayfinding Signs – Director Maria Becerra gave the Commission an update on the Wayfinding Signs progress. She informed them of what was discussed at the meeting that took place the previous week with Julie from VIA marketing, Ken Mika, and Mark Knesek, as well as notified the Commission about the next meeting regarding the Wayfinding Signs. The Commissioners also discussed the options for QR codes on the Wayfinding Signs.

2. Commercial Grants – President Sean Conley mentioned that Nephilim Studio's Commercial Grant Funding is being advertised. Attorney John Reed explained his discoveries while reviewing documents and that there has been, in his review, more than the required amount to receive the total requested reimbursement amount. Director Maria Becerra also notified the Commission of other businesses that have expressed interest in the Commercial Grant Program. The Commission also discussed current guidelines and potential changes to these guidelines. Commissioner Bill Leep explained how the grants worked in terms of budgets in previous years. Attorney John Reed expressed that the town would need to change it on an ordinance level, while other Commissioners explained that they believe the title changed back in 2018 when the guidelines were changed. It was determined that the only thing left to change was the name of the line item in the budget that holds the Commercial Grant funds. Commissioners discussed the possibility of adding a small, non-matched grant for businesses who cannot afford a larger project like the current one. Lastly, the commission discussed the Belmonte Grant extensions and the Commission determined that Mr. Belmonte needed to reapply and would not be awarded any more extensions.

3. Mural – Director Maria Becerra gave updates to the Commission on the IN Indiana Public Art Activation Grant. She explained that they can expect an update at the end of the month on whether the money will be awarded or not.

4. Highland Main Street – Commissioner Alex Robertson and Assistant Director Susan Hale provided updates on the Restaurant Crawl, Farmers Market, and Parks Department Brochure.

5. Highland Neighbors for Sustainability – Assistant Director Susan Hale relayed to the Commission what had been discussed at the HNS meeting the previous Tuesday and Director Maria Becerra informed the Commission about the meeting taking place later in the week with some HNS members.

6. Residential Grants – Director Maria Becerra explained to the Commission what other cities offer in terms of residential property grants, as they previously requested. Discussion ensued among the Commissioners.

7. Recording Secretary Resolution – Director Maria Becerra presented the Commission with a Resolution to appoint a new recording secretary which will be on the agenda for the next Plenary Meeting.

8. Commissioner Comments – President Sean Conley brought up the Police Homeownership Program and explained that HUD announced the new median income data will be available on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Discussion also ensued about if this program could be funded by TIF revenue, if it is not in the current Economic Development Plan. The Commissioners then discussed whether there is an Economic Development Plan.

The meeting was adjourned by President Sean Conley at 7:31 pm.