

**Enrolled Minutes of the Fifty-First Regular Meeting or Special Meeting
For the Thirtieth Highland Town Council Regular Plenary
Business Meeting (In person) Monday, January 12, 2026**

The Thirtieth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met in its regular plenary session on Monday, January 12, 2026 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 in person meeting and lived streamed to the Town of Highland Facebook. Facebook permits the public to observe and record the proceedings but allows no interaction between and among the Town Council and members of the public. The public is able to participate in person. Councilor Georgeff, Councilor Alex Robertson, Councilor Tom Black and Councilor Philip Scheeringa all participated in person. Councilor Doug Turich was absent with prior notice.

Pursuant to HMC Section 2.05.130(A)(2), the Town Council considered and reviewed the agenda in an informal proceeding in the plenary meeting room before the president called the meeting to order.

The Town Council President George Georgeff presided over the meeting. The Town Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak, was present to memorialize the proceedings. The meeting was opened with Councilor Philip Scheeringa reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and offering a prayer.

Roll Call: Present on roll call were Councilors George Georgeff, Alex Robertson, Thomas Black, Philip Scheeringa were present. Councilor Turich was absent with prior notice. Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak was also present. A quorum was attained.

Additional Officials Present: Tim Diamond, CPRP, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation; Metropolitan Police Chief Ralph Potesta; Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra; Glenn Schlessler, Fire Chief; Ed Dabrowski, Director of Information Technology, Kenneth J. Mika, Building Commissioner, Mark Knesek, Public Works Director and John Reed, Attorney with JPR Legal Services were present

Guests: Theresa Badovich (remotely) and Robin Carlascio (remotely) of the Idea Factory were also present.

Minutes of the Previous Meetings: The minutes of the December 22, 2025 Plenary meeting were approved by general consent.

Special Orders:

1. Election of the **Town Council President** for 2026, pursuant to Section 2.05.040 of the Highland Municipal Code.

Councilor Scheeringa nominated George Georgeff for Town Council President in 2026. There were no further nominations. Councilor Black moved that nominations be closed, and a unanimous ballot be cast in favor of Councilor George Georgeff as the 2026 Town Council President. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives

and no negatives. The motion passed. Councilor George Georgeff was elected and remained the 74th Town Council President.

2. Election of the **Town Council Vice President** for 2026, pursuant to Section 2.05.040.

Councilor Black nominated Doug Turich for Town Council Vice President in 2026. There were no further nominations. Councilor Scheeringa moved that nominations be closed, and a unanimous ballot be cast in favor Councilor Doug Turich as the 2026 Town Council Vice President. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. Councilor Doug Turich was elected to serve as Town Council Vice President.

Comments from the Public or Visitors: None

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

2025
 TOWN OF HIGHLAND INJURIES FOR THE MONTH
DECEMBER

CASE	DATE OF INJURY	DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	Record Only	OSHA	Not OSHA	Filed with
				No Med Treatment	Recordable	Recordable	WC Insurance
RO12	12/1/25	Public works	While leaving work EE slipped on ice & fell in parking lot.	X		X	X
RO13	12/6/25	Police	Ofc struck in face detaining resisting suspect	X		X	X
RO14	12/19/25	Public Works	EE picked up log one handed during water break	X		X	X

RO = Record Only

DEPT	2025		2025				
	INJURIES	YEAR TO	2024	RESTRICTED	LOST DAYS	RESTRICTED	LOST DAYS
	THIS MONTH	DATE	Total Injuries Last Year	DAYS THIS YEAR	THIS YEAR	DAYS 2024	2024
PARK & REC		1	1		7	4	56
FIRE			1				
POLICE	1	6	7	7	36	0	17
STREET		2	1		4		
WATER SEWER	2	4	1	14	14		
CT			1				
REDV			1				
BUILDING		1					
TOTALS	3	14	13	21	61	4	73

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

Building Report December, 2025

PERMIT TYPE	#	Res.	Comm.	Est. Cost	Fee Collected
Commercial Buildings	0			\$ -	\$ -
Comm. Additions/Remodel	1		1	\$ 10,570.00	\$ 273.00
Signs	1		1	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 141.00
Single Family	0			\$ -	\$ -
Duplex/Condo	0			\$ -	\$ -
Residential Additions	0			\$ -	\$ -
Residential Remodeling	17	17		\$ 315,057.00	\$ 6,418.50
Concrete/Asphalt/Concrete	0			\$ -	\$ -
Garages	1	1		\$ 18,000.00	\$ 532.50
Sheds	0			\$ -	\$ -
Decks & Porches	0			\$ -	\$ -
Fences	1	1		\$ 2,056.00	\$ 87.00
Above/In ground pools	0			\$ -	\$ -
Drain Tile/Waterproofing	3	3		\$ 54,544.00	\$ 1,288.50
Misc: Demo (1); Road Cut (1)	2	2		\$ -	\$ 256.50
Total Building Permits	26	24	2	\$ 402,727.00	\$ 8,997.00

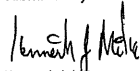
Electrical Permits	8	6	2	\$ -	\$ 1,142.00
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Mechanical Permits	19	17	2	\$ -	\$ 2,269.00
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Plumbing Permits	10	9	1	\$ -	\$ 1,470.90
Water Meters	0			\$ -	\$ -
Water taps	0			\$ -	\$ -
Sewer/Storm Taps	0			\$ -	\$ -
Total Plumbing Permits	10	9	1	\$ -	\$ 1,470.90

December 2025 Code Enforcement: 77 Investigations, 43 Warnings & No Citations were issued.
 Inspections done for the month of December 2025 were as follows: 29 Building Inspections,
 15 Plumbing Inspections, 21 HVAC and 18 Electrical Inspections. There were no Electrical Exams given.

Submitted By:


 Kenneth J. Mfka

Mark Herak

From: Denise Beck
Sent: Tuesday, January 6, 2026 4:06 PM
To: Mark Herak
Cc: Glenn Schlessler; Deputy Chief Michael Pipta
Subject: Fire Department Stats

Good afternoon,

December 2025 Stats

Types of Calls:	2025	YTD
General Alarms	7	131
<u>Paid Still Alarms</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>466</u>
Totals	47	597

Denise Beck

Administrative Assistant
Highland Fire Department
2901 Highway Ave.
Highland, IN 46322
(219)-923-9876

Communications:

Government Offices closed in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. January 19th
Garbage and Recycling will still be on Tuesday, January 20, 2026
Restaurant Crawl January 27th
All on-street parking is banned when there is more the 2 inches of snow

Appointments:

• **Statutory Boards and Commissions**

Executive Appointments (May be made in meeting or at another time)

1. **Municipal Plan Commission** (1) appointment to be made by Town Council President. *(Note: Currently held by Jim Kisse, (R) term ending 1st Monday January 2026.) No more than two (2) of any party. Current composition is two (2) Republicans, one (2) Democrat. Term is four (4) years.*

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive announced the reappointment of **Jim Kisse**, 2651 43rd Street, Highland as the citizen member to the Highland Municipal Plan Commission. The Clerk-Treasurer noted he would prepare the proper certificates of appointment to be executed by the Town Council President.

2. **Redevelopment Commission** (3) appointments to be made by Town Council President. *(Note: Currently held by Philip Scheeringa, Alex Robertson and Tom Black, all expiring 1st Monday in January 2026 and up to 90 days after term expires if no action)*

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive announced the appointments of **Alex Robertson**, 2914 Highway Avenue, Highland; **Philip Scheeringa**, 3327 George Street, Highland, and **Tom Black**, 3515 Garfield Avenue, Highland to the Redevelopment Commission. Terms are 1 year and until a successor is appointed and qualified, subject to the limitation in IC 36-1-15-10(d)(1). The Clerk-Treasurer noted he would prepare the proper certificates of appointment to be executed by the Town Council President.

3. **Waterworks Board of Directors:** (2) appointments to be made by Town Council President. *(Note: Currently held by Rick Volbrecht (R) and Larry Kondrat (D), term ending 1st Monday January 2026). Term is for three (3) year. Current composition of the board is two Republicans and three Democrats. No more than three of any one party under state law. Larry Kondrat re-applied as a Republican.*

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive announced the reappointment of **Rick Volbrecht (R)**, 9221 Parkway Drive, Highland to the Waterworks Board of Directors and the appointment of **Ray Borowiec (D)**, 9434 Parkway Drive, Highland . The Clerk-Treasurer noted he would prepare the proper certificates of appointment to be executed by the Town Council President.

4. **Board of Sanitary Commissioners:** (1) appointment to be made by Town Council President. *(Currently held by Kathy DeGuilio-Fox (D), term ending December 31, 2025 and*

up to 90 days after term expires if no action.) Term is for four (4) years. Current composition of the Board is three (3) Democrats and two (2) Republicans. There can be no more than 3 from any one party.

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive announced the re-appointment of **Kathy DeGuilio-Fox (D)**, 8839 Highland Street, Highland to the Board of Board of Sanitary Commissioners. Terms are 4 years and until a successor is appointed and qualified, subject to the limitation in IC 36-1-15-10(d)(1). The Clerk-Treasurer noted he would prepare the proper certificate of appointment to be executed by the Town Council President.

Regional Statutory Commissions or Boards

- 5. Economic Development Commission.** (1) Appointment to be made by the municipal executive. *(Currently held by Ray Borowiec, term ending 1st Monday February 2026 and up to 90 days after term expires if no action)*

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive announced the re-appointment of **Ray Borowiec**, 9434 Parkway Drive, Highland to the Economic Development Commission. . Terms are 4 years and until a successor is appointed and qualified, subject to the limitation in IC 36-1-15-10(d)(1). The Clerk-Treasurer noted he would prepare the proper certificate of appointment to be executed by the Town Council President.

- 6. Northwestern Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC).** (1) No action necessary unless a change is desired. Town Council President is appointment authority. Must be an elected official who resides in the Town. *(Current serving: Tom Black.) Must be a member of the Town Council. Term is co-extensive with term on council unless legislative body acts otherwise*

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive noted that no action was necessarily required if no change was desired, however, the Town Council President wished to affirm and acknowledge the continuing appointment of **Tom Black**, 3515 Garfield Avenue, Highland to the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission. Terms are in force until the appointing authority appoints a successor. The Clerk-Treasurer further noted he would prepare the proper certificate of appointment to be executed by the Town Council President.

Home Rule Boards and Commissions

- 9. Main Street Bureau Board of Directors.** Town Council President appointment. (1) Appointment. Town Council Representative must be a member of the Town Council. *Term co-extensive with term of appointee. (Note: Currently serving is Alex Robertson)*

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive announced the reappointment of **Alex Robertson**, 2914 Highway Avenue, Highland as the Town Council Representative to the Main Street Bureau Board of Directors.

10. **Tree Board.** (2) Appointments to be nominated by the Town Council but appointed by the Town Council President. (Note: Currently held by Richard Underkofler and Blane Roberts, term ending 1st Monday January 2025). Term is for three (3) years Richard Underkofler; Blane Roberts)

- a. Nomination by the Town Council. (The council would pass a motion to nominate.)
- b. Appointment by executive. (If nominee is acceptable, the Town Council President may appoint.)

- **Tree Board Chairperson.** The Town Council President also appoints the Chairperson to be selected from the membership of the board. (See HMC Section 8.25.030 (C)) (Currently held by James Colias.)

11. **Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals.** (1) appointment to be made by Town Council President. (Note: Currently held by Matt Thomas, (R) term ending 1st Monday January 2026.)

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive announced the reappointment of **Matt Thomas**, 8605 Liabile Road, Highland to the Advisor Board of Zoning Appeals. The Clerk-Treasurer noted he would prepare the proper certificate of appointment to be executed by the Town Council President.

12. **Committee and Liaison Assignments.** Assignments made by Town Council President. (Custom and Convention)

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive made the following Committee and Liaison Assignments:

The Town Council President announced the following liaison and committee assignments:

- **George Georgeff:** Town Executive (I.C. 36-1-2-5-(4); I.C. 36-5-2-2; I.C. 36-5-2-7); • Board of Trustees of the Police Pension Fund, Chair (By Law) • Budget Committee Chairman • Redevelopment Commission Member • Liaison to the Board of Water Works • Liaison to the Sanitary Board
- **Doug Turich:** Metropolitan Police Commissioners Liaison • Liaison and Plan Commission Member • Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals Liaison • Redevelopment Commission Member • Liaison to Building & Inspection Department
- **Alex Robertson:** • Redevelopment Commission Member • Fire Department Liaison • Public Works Liaison • Liaison to Main Street Bureau • Liaison to the Tree Board • Liaison to the Highland Neighbor for Sustainability.
- **Thomas (Tom) Black:** Redevelopment Commission Liaison and Member • Member of the Lake County Solid Waste Management District Board • Member of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIPRC) • Shared Ethics Representative • Liaison Traffic

Safety

- **Philip Scheeringa:** *Redevelopment Commission Member • Information Communications and Technology Department Liaison • Park and Recreation Board Liaison.*

Legislative Appointments

1. **Municipal Plan Commission** (Note: *Appointees may be elected or appointed official or employees of the Town. No action necessary as incumbents continue to serve unless the legislative body acts to change.*
Currently serving: Morgan Wright (municipal employee); Bernie Zemen (appointed official, he is a member of the Water Board); Doug Turich (elected official). The term of office of a member (who is appointed from the membership of a legislative body, a public board or commission or as an employee) is co-extensive with the member's term of office on that body, board, or council, or term of employment, unless the appointing authority appoints, at its first regular meeting in any year, another to serve as its representative. (Pursuant to IC 36-7-4-217)

Action. The Town Council President as municipal executive noted that he was making no changes to the three (3) members currently serving: Morgan Wright who serves in the capacity as municipal employee, Bernie Zemen who serves in the capacity as appointed official and Doug Turich who serves in the capacity as elected official.

2. **Park and Recreation Board.** (2) appointments to be made by the Town Council. (Note: *Current appointee is Omar Torres (R), term ending 1st Monday January 2026) Term is for four (4) years. Nick Russo (D), term ending 1st Monday January 2027). (Current composition is 2 democrats and 2 republicans. Not more than 2 members may be of the same party.)*
4. **Town Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners.** (1) appointment to be made by the Town Council. (Note: *Current appointee is Terry Krooswyk (D), term ending 1st Monday January 2026). Term is for three (3) years. (Current composition for these five citizen positions is three democrats and two republicans)*
5. **Redevelopment Commission.** (2) appointments to be made by the Town Council. (Note: *current appointees are Doug Turich and George Georgeff.*)

Action. Councilor Scheeringa moved the appointment of **Doug Turich**, 9336 4th Place, Highland, and the appointment of **George Georgeff**, 2251 Oakdale Avenue, Highland both to a term of one-year and until a successor is appointed and qualified, subject to the limitation in IC 36-1-8-10, on the Redevelopment Commission. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. Doug Turich and George Georgeff were appointed to the Redevelopment Commission as indicated. The Clerk-Treasurer noted he would prepare the required certifications of appointment as required.

Regional Statutory Commissions or Boards

6. **Lake County Solid Waste Management District Board of Directors.** (1) No action necessary unless a change is desired. (Note: Currently serving Tom Black) Must be a member of the Town Council. Term is co-extensive with term on council unless legislative body acts otherwise.

Home Rule Commissions

7. **Main Street Bureau Board:** (17) appointments to be made by the Town Council. Term: Two years ending 1 Jan 2027. *Currently only 8 of 17 appointed.*

General Orders and Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

1. **Resolution No. 2026-01:** A Resolution Of The Fiscal Body Of The Town Of Highland Approving And Fixing The Official Charges Or Fees For Information And Communication Technology Services Provided By The Municipality To Its Executive Departments And Offices And Accounted In The Information And Communication Technology Fund.

Councilor Black moved the passage and adoption of Resolution No. 2026-01. Councilor Robertson seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and (0) negatives. The motion passed. The resolution was adopted pending the signature of the Town Executive.

**TOWN of HIGHLAND
Town Council Resolution No. 2026-01**

A RESOLUTION OF THE FISCAL BODY OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND APPROVING AND FIXING THE OFFICIAL CHARGES OR FEES FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE MUNICIPALITY TO ITS EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICES AND ACCOUNTED IN THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FUND

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Highland serves as both the legislative and fiscal body of the municipality, all pursuant to I.C. 36-1-2-6, I.C. 36-1-1-2-9 and I.C. 36-5-2-2;

WHEREAS, IC 36-1-3-2 and IC 36-1-3-6(b)(1) confer upon local units of government the powers that they need for the effective operation of government as to local affairs and prescribe the manner and form of enactment for any such exercise of power;

WHEREAS, The Highland Town Council did adopt and establish an Information and Communication Technology Fund, by adoption of Ordinance No. 1323, amending the Highland Municipal Code by adding a new section § 31.08 (now codified as Section

3.45.110), which provides for an internal service fund as an accounting entity to which the resources and costs associated with providing information and communication technology services to the municipality will be accounted; and,

WHEREAS, Section 3.45.110 (F) (1) particularly provides that resources or revenue for these services supported by the internal service fund may consist of *“interdepartmental charges, contributions, cost shares or assessments levied against funds or departments of the municipality to support the lawful purposes and budget of the Information and Communication Technology Fund;”*

WHEREAS, Section 3.45.110 (F) (1) (a) still further provides that the *“charges and rates shall be developed and recommended by the proper officers of the municipality and fixed and approved by the Town Council”*;

WHEREAS, The proper officers of the municipality have developed and now recommend charges and rates for **FY 2026** to support the costs associated with the provision of information and communication technology services to the municipality and its several executive departments and utilities; and,

WHEREAS, The Town Council now desires to fix and adopt the charges and rates as recommended,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, as follows:

Section 1. That the proper officer(s) of the municipality have developed and now recommend the following annual charge for services for the fiscal year **2026** as follows:

(a) For information and communication technology services provided to the several departments reposed in the **Corporation General Fund, the annual charge is \$103,107.00;**

(b) For information and communication technology services provided to the department reposed in the **Park and Recreation Fund, the annual charge \$79,300.00;**

(c) For information and communication technology services provided to the department reposed in the **Redevelopment General Fund, the annual charge is \$21,000.00;**

(d) For information and communication technology services provided to the **Waterworks Utility, the annual charge is \$109,156.00;**

(e) For information and communication technology services provided to the **Wastewater/Stormwater Utility, the annual charge is \$109,156.00;**

Section 2. That the Town Council hereby finds and determines that the rates and charges as recommended are consistent with IC 36-1-3-8(a)(6), calculated to include

reasonable costs associated with those purposes outlined in Section 3.45.110 (D) of the Highland Municipal Code;

Section 3. That the Town Council hereby now fixes and approves the annual rates and charges as set forth herein, and authorizes the municipal fiscal officer to take such lawful measures to charge and collect the fees herein, either as a single lump sum fee or collected periodically until fully collected, and then to deposit these charges into the **Information and Communication Technology Fund;**

DULY RESOLVED and ADOPTED this 12th Day of January 2026, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

ATTEST:

**Mark Herak,
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5)**

2. Proposed Ordinance No. 1845: An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance No. 1808 to establish the Wage and Salary Rates of the Elected Officers, the Non-Elected Officers and the Employees of the Town of Highland, Indiana particularly creating a Residency Stipend Provision in the Public Works Department (Agency) and the Parks and Recreation Department.

Councilor Robinson moved to defer and move proposed Ordinance No. 1845 to the study session. Scheeringa seconded.

Discussion:

Councilor Robertson said he wanted some clarification because he knows that we added in the Park Department Employees when we amended the salary ordinance. At that time, it was discussed that there would be one current employee eligible and now we come to learn it is closer to ten (10). He said he was concern that the residency stipend isn't being used as it's intended purpose. He said it is to incentivize employees that we want living in town who are responding to issues in town in order to decrease their response time and this is a way to incentivize them to move into town or to remain in Town. I feel like if we start to blanket all of these departments, it loses its integrity as far as mechanism for what it's intended to do. He wanted some clarification on the Parks Department side. Is it for every staff member? Is it for certain staff members coming in and responding to snowfall,

emergencies and stuff like that? If we are giving it to everyone, it is starting to feel like a salary increase. We gave a 2% raise across the board and now we're giving them an additional raise via a residency stipend.

Councilor Georgeff called for the question. Upon a roll call to defer and move proposed Ordinance No. 1845, there were four (4) affirmatives and no (0) negatives. The motion passed.

ORDINANCE No. 1845
of the
TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND PERSONNEL PROGRAM OF THE MUNICIPALITY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS ORDINANCE COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, PURSUANT TO IC 36-1-3 AND OTHER RELEVANT STATUTES, AND AMENDING SOME PORTIONS OF WAGE AND SALARY ORDINANCE.

WHEREAS, Title 36, Article 1, Chapter 5 of the Indiana Code provides that the legislative body of a unit shall codify, revise, rearrange, or compile the ordinances of the unit into a complete, simplified code excluding formal parts of the ordinances;

WHEREAS, The legislative body of this unit, the Town of Highland, is the Town Council, pursuant to IC 36-1-2-9(5) and IC 36-5-2-2;

WHEREAS, The present general and permanent ordinances of the Town of Highland, formally codified in 2012, are in need of technical and substantive modifications not confined to any particular Title, Article or Chapter but nevertheless desirable to further improve and perfect the Code; and,

WHEREAS, The Town Council, is persuaded that it is necessary and desirable to adopt the several technical and substantive modifications necessary to carry out this requirement and to further improve and perfect the Code,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED BY the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, as follows:

Section 1. That the Highland Municipal Employee Handbook of the Compensation and Benefit Ordinance, that Section 4.03.13 is hereby amended by adding section 4.03.131, and shall read as follows:

4.03.131 Residency Stipend pay for Full-Time Employees of the Highland Parks and Recreation Department and Full-Time Employees of the Highland Public Works Department (Agency) residing in the Town of Highland.

Effective January 1, 2026, a member of the Highland Public Works Department who is a resident of the Town of Highland will receive \$200.00 a month for each complete month that they are a resident of the Town of Highland or a maximum of \$2400.00 in a calendar year. In order to qualify for this stipend, the Employee needs to provide a copy of his/her Homestead Exemption or a copy of their

current lease accompanied by a sworn statement of residency. Employees will be paid in one (1) lump sum, up to \$2400.00, in January of the following year regardless of whether they still reside in Highland or are employed by the Town of Highland.

Section 2. The provisions of this Ordinance shall be retroactively effective from and after January 1, 2026.

Section 3. That this ordinance shall be effective from and after its passage and adoption, as evidenced by the signature of the Town Council President and attested thereto by the Clerk-Treasurer, all pursuant to IC 36-5-2-10 and IC 36-5-2-10.2.

Introduced and Filed on 12th day of January 2026. Consideration on same day or at same meeting of introduction sustained a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed, pursuant to IC 36-5-2-9.8.

DULY ORDAINED AND ADOPTED this 12th Day of January 2026, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak,
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5; IC 36-5-2-10.2)

3. Proposed Ordinance No. 1842-A: An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance No. 1842 to establish the Wage and Salary Rates of the Elected Officers, the Non-Elected Officers and the Employees of the Town of Highland, Indiana particularly creating a Residency Provision in the Parks and Recreation Department and the Public Works Department (Agency).

Councilor Robinson moved to defer and move proposed Ordinance No. 1842-A to the study session. Scheeringa seconded. . Upon a roll call to defer and move proposed Ordinance No. 1842-A, there were three (3) affirmatives and one (1) negative, with Councilors Georgeff, Robertson and Scheeringa voting in the affirmative and Councilor Black voting in the negative.

**ORDINANCE No. 1842-A
of the
TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

AN ORDINANCE to AMEND ORDINANCE No. 1842 to ESTABLISH THE WAGE and SALARY RATES of the ELECTED OFFICERS, the NON-ELECTED OFFICERS, and the EMPLOYEES of the TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA PARTICULARLY CREATING A RESIDENCY STIPEND PROVISION IN THE HIGHLAND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (AGENCY) and the HIGHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT.

WHEREAS, Title 36, Article 1 Chapter 4 of the Indiana Code confers certain general corporate powers on the several units of government in Indiana;

WHEREAS, Section fifteen of that chapter specifically provides that a unit of government may fix the level of compensation of its officers and employees;

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-5-3-2 provides in pertinent part that the town legislative body shall provide reasonable compensation for the other town officers and employees;

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-5-3-2(b), further provides that the Town Legislative body shall, by ordinance fix the compensation of its own members and the Town Clerk-Treasurer;

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-5-3-2(c) still further provides that the compensation of an elected town officer may not be changed in the year for which it is fixed, nor may it be reduced below the amount fixed for the previous year;

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Highland, as the Town Legislative body, now desires to amend the ordinance that was adopted to fix the compensation of its elected officers, appointed officers and employees of the Town for the year 2026 and thereafter as amended;

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Highland, as the Town Legislative body, has been advised that to encourage residency in Highland, it is desirable to offer a Residency Stipend to the full-time employees of the Highland Public Works Department (Agency) and the Highland Parks and Recreation Department in the amount of \$200 per month, not to exceed the per year sum of \$2,400, for every month they reside in Town, to be paid in one (1) lump sum; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, that the Wages, Salaries, and special detail levels of the Officers and Employees of the Town of Highland, are hereby established, modified and fixed, pursuant to the provisions indicated herein and as follows:

Section 1. That in Section 11 of Ordinance No. 1842 be amended by adding a successor subdivision, to be styled as Section 11 subdivision (F) which shall read as follows:

Section 11. *Parks and Recreation Department.* That subject to the provisions of this ordinance, the salary and wages for the non-elected officers and employees of the Town of Highland are hereby fixed for its **Highland Parks and Recreation Department** as follows:

(F) Residency Stipend Provision:

Residency Stipend Provision. Effective January 1, 2026, a member of the Highland Park and Recreation Department who is a resident of the Town of Highland will receive \$200.00 a month for each complete month that they are a resident of the Town of Highland or a maximum of \$2400.00 in a calendar year. In order to qualify for this stipend, the Employee needs to provide a copy of his/her Homestead Exemption or a copy of their current lease accompanied by a sworn statement of residency. Employees will be paid in one (1) lump sum, up to \$2400.00, in January of the following year regardless of whether they still reside in Highland or are employed by the Town of Highland.

Section 2. That in Section 9 of Ordinance No. 1842 be amended by adding a successor subdivision, to be styled as Section 9 subdivision (F) which shall read as follows:

Section 9. *Public Works Department (Agency).* That subject to the provisions of this ordinance, the salary and wages for the non-elected officers and employees of the Town of Highland are hereby fixed for its **Public Works Department (Agency)** as follows:

(F) Residency Stipend Provision:

Residency Stipend Provision. Effective January 1, 2026, a member of the Highland Public Works Department who is a resident of the Town of Highland will receive \$200.00 a month for each complete month that they are a resident of the Town of Highland or a maximum of \$2400.00 in a calendar year. In order to qualify for this stipend, the Employee needs to provide a copy of his/her Homestead Exemption or a copy of their current lease accompanied by a sworn statement of residency. Employees will be paid in one (1) lump sum, up to \$2400.00, in January of the following year regardless of whether they still reside in Highland or are employed by the Town of Highland.

Section 3. That if any part of this ordinance shall be held invalid, such part shall be deemed severable and the invalidity thereof shall not affect the remaining parts of this ordinance;

Section 4. Any and all such ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed and are of no further force nor effect;

Section 5. That except where otherwise noted herein, other compensation and benefits matters not expressly provided herein for salaried and hourly employees and

the Clerk-Treasurer shall be as set forth in the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance, commonly called the Employee Handbook as amended from time to time;

Section 6. This ordinance shall become and be in full force and effect *from January 1, 2026*, and after its passage and adoption upon its signature by the executive in the manner prescribed by IC 36-5-2-10(a).

Section 7. That the Clerk-Treasurer shall have authority to implement the provisions of this ordinance pursuant to the authority expressly set forth in IC 36-5-6-6 (a) (3) & (4).

Introduced and Filed on 12th day of January 2026. Consideration on same day or at same meeting of introduction sustained a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed, pursuant to IC 36-5-2-9.8.

DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this 12th Day of January 2026, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5; IC 36-5-2-10.2)

- 4. Proposed Ordinance No. 1842-B:** An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance No. 1842 to establish the Wage and Salary Rates of the Elected Officers, the Non-Elected Officers and the Employees of the Town of Highland, Indiana particularly creating a Stand-By Provision in the Parks and Recreation Department.

Councilor Scheeringa introduced and moved for the consideration of Proposed Ordinance No. 1842-B at the same meeting of its introduction. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, a unanimous vote being necessary, there were four (4) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The Ordinance could be considered at the same meeting of its introduction.

Councilor Black moved for the passage adoption of Ordinance No. 1842-B at the same meeting of its introduction. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, a two-thirds vote being necessary, there were four (4) affirmatives and no (0) negatives. The

motion passed. The enactment was passed and adopted upon the signature of the municipal executive at the same meeting of its introduction.

**ORDINANCE No. 1842-B
of the
TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

AN ORDINANCE to AMEND ORDINANCE No. 1842 to ESTABLISH THE WAGE and SALARY RATES of the ELECTED OFFICERS, the NON-ELECTED OFFICERS, and the EMPLOYEES of the TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA PARTICULARLY CREATING A STAND-BY PROVISION IN THE PARKS AND RECREATION.

WHEREAS, Title 36, Article 1 Chapter 4 of the Indiana Code confers certain general corporate powers on the several units of government in Indiana;

WHEREAS, Section fifteen of that chapter specifically provides that a unit of government may fix the level of compensation of its officers and employees;

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-5-3-2 provides in pertinent part that the town legislative body shall provide reasonable compensation for the other town officers and employees;

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-5-3-2(b), further provides that the Town Legislative body shall, by ordinance fix the compensation of its own members and the Town Clerk-Treasurer;

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-5-3-2(c) still further provides that the compensation of an elected town officer may not be changed in the year for which it is fixed, nor may it be reduced below the amount fixed for the previous year;

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Highland, as the Town Legislative body, has been further advised that needs of the Parks and Recreation Department warrant the creation of a Stand-By Provision and to fix the rate; and,

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Highland, as the Town Legislative body, now desires to amend the ordinance that was adopted to fix the compensation of its elected officers, appointed officers and employees of the Town for the year 2026 and thereafter as amended;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, that the Wages, Salaries, and special detail levels of the Officers and Employees of the Town of Highland, are hereby established, modified and fixed, pursuant to the provisions indicated herein and as follows:

Section 1. That in Section 11 of Ordinance No. 1842 be amended by adding a successor subdivision, to be styled as Section 11 subdivision (E) which shall read as follows:

Section 11. *Parks and Recreation Department.* That subject to the provisions of this ordinance, the salary and wages for the non-elected officers and employees of the Town of Highland are hereby fixed for its **Highland Parks and Recreation Department** as follows:

(E) *Stand-by Duty.* During particular work periods workers in the Park and Recreation Department will be scheduled to stand-by, which may mean the worker will be engaged to wait for mobilization. The Superintendent of Parks will publish written guidelines regarding administration of this duty. There is an authorized rate that shall be fixed at an hourly rate to be applied by the number of hours of stand-by duty that is assigned in a bi-weekly period. It shall be uniform for all workers. The rate is now fixed at \$1.23 per hour.

Section 2. That if any part of this ordinance shall be held invalid, such part shall be deemed severable and the invalidity thereof shall not affect the remaining parts of this ordinance;

Section 3. Any and all such ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed and are of no further force nor effect;

Section 4. That except where otherwise noted herein, other compensation and benefits matters not expressly provided herein for salaried and hourly employees and the Clerk-Treasurer shall be as set forth in the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance, commonly called the Employee Handbook as amended from time to time;

Section 5. This ordinance shall become and be in full force and effect *from January 1, 2026*, and after its passage and adoption upon its signature by the executive in the manner prescribed by IC 36-5-2-10(a).

Section 6. That the Clerk-Treasurer shall have authority to implement the provisions of this ordinance pursuant to the authority expressly set forth in IC 36-5-6-6 (a) (3) & (4).

Introduced and Filed on 12th day of January 2026. Consideration on same day or at same meeting of introduction sustained a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed, pursuant to IC 36-5-2-9.8.

DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this 12th Day of January 2025, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5; IC 36-5-2-10.2)

5. **Proposed Ordinance No. 1837:** An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 3.21, of the Compensation , Benefits and Personnel Program of the Municipality to be known as the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance commonly known as the Employees Handbook, entitled Promotions, pursuant to IC36-1-3 and other relevant statutes.

**requires 2 readings if the Council desires to pass it on the first night of introduction.*

Councilor Scheeringa moved to defer proposed Ordinance No. 1837 till the January 26, 2026 meeting as Councilor Turich was absent from tonight's meeting. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed.

7. **Works Board Order No. 2026-01:** An Order Authorizing and Approving An Extension of the Agreement between The Idea Factory and the Town of Highland to perform Professional Communications and Media Design and Development services for the Municipality for a Term of Six (6) Months.

Councilor Robertson moved to approve Works Board Order No.2026-01 inclusive of the exhibit. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives, no negatives. The motion passed and Works Board Order No. 2026-01 was adopted pending the signature of the parties.

**The Town of Highland
Board of Works**

Order of the Works Board No. 2026-01

AN ORDER AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE IDEA FACTORY AND THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND TO PERFORM PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FOR THE MUNICIPALITY FOR A TERM OF SIX MONTHS, WITH OPTION TO RENEW AND EXTEND

Whereas, The Town of Highland, through its Town Council, which is the Works Board of the Municipality has heretofore determined that a need exists to provide greater information to the public regarding the operations and services of the municipality;

Whereas, The Town has heretofore determined that a need exists to engage professional communications and media design and development services to assist and

support the provision of greater information to the public regarding the operations and services of the municipality;

Whereas, Robin A. Carlascio and Theresa K. Badovich, d.b.a. The *Idea Factory*, a media development and design, communication consulting alliance, has proposed to provide professional editorial services to assist and support the provision of greater information to the public regarding the operations and services of the municipality through the development and promulgation of a municipal newsletter;

Whereas, As purchasing agency, the Town Council may purchase services using any procedure it considers appropriate, pursuant to IC 5-22-6-1; and

Whereas, The Highland Municipal Code provides that, the Town Council may make all contracts for professional services on the basis of competence and qualifications for the type of services to be performed, and negotiate compensation that the public agency determines to be reasonable, pursuant to Section 3.05.090; and

Whereas, There are now or will soon be sufficient and available appropriations balances on hand to support the payments for these services under the agreement, pursuant to IC 5-22-17-3(e); and

Whereas, The Town of Highland, through its Town Council acting as the Works Board now desires to accept and approve the agreement for services as herein described.

Now Therefore be it Ordered by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana;

Section 1. That the agreement (incorporated by reference and made a part of this Order) between **Robin A. Carlascio** and **Theresa K. Badovich** doing business as the **Idea Factory**, and the Town of Highland, provide professional editorial services to assist and support the provision of greater information to the public regarding the operations and services of the municipality through the development and promulgation of a municipal newsletter for the period beginning **1 January 2026 through to 30 June 2026** as described herein is hereby approved, adopted and ratified in each and every respect;

Section 2. That the charges under the agreement for the services, in the amount of **\$2,600.00 per issue**, or **\$650.00** per page, which include publishing and coordinating a monthly newsletter to be distributed as an insert in the monthly utility invoice and other related services; stock images or illustrations at **\$53.56** per image or illustration, custom photography or graphics at **\$107.12** per image or graphic, and website maintenance/updates and services in the amount of **\$145.00 per week**, Web hosting in the amount of **\$26.77 per month** and Web security in the amount of **\$133.90 per month** are found to be reasonable and fair, all pursuant to IC 5-22-6-1 and Section 3.05.090 of the municipal code;

Section 3. Effective July 1, 2025 Idea Factory shall be paid for its services rendered pursuant to this Agreement, the sum of \$195.00 per week for website maintenance/update fees per week which is found to be reasonable and fair, all pursuant to IC 5-22-6-1 and Section 3.05.090.

Section 4. That the charges under the terms of the agreement for all the services, will be paid to *The Idea Factory*, after presentation of an invoice for services, following their delivery;

Section 5. That the Town Council President be authorized to execute this agreement under the terms of this order with his signature as attested thereto by the Clerk-Treasurer;

Section 6. That the Town Council President or his designee must approve a preliminary edition of the newsletter at least two weeks prior to publication.

Be it so Ordered.

DULY, PASSED, ADOPTED and ORDERED by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, acting as the Works Board, this 12th day of January 2026 having passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

**WORKS BOARD of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak,
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1;IC 36-5-6-5)

AGREEMENT

This Transitional Agreement made and entered into this 12th day of January 2026, by and between the *TOWN OF HIGHLAND, BY AND THROUGH ITS TOWN COUNCIL* (hereinafter referred to as the "Town"), and *ROBIN CARLASCIO and THERESA BADOVICH d/b/a THE IDEA FACTORY* (hereinafter referred to as "Idea Factory").

WITNESSETH THAT:

WHEREAS, The Town is interested engaging the services of Idea Factory for publishing and coordinating a monthly newsletter (Gazebo Express) to be distributed throughout the Town; and

WHEREAS, Idea Factory is interested in entering into such an agreement and engaging its services to publish and coordinate a monthly newsletter within the Town; and

WHEREAS, The parties wish to reduce their agreement to writing;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises and covenants contained herein, it is agreed as follows:

1. Idea Factory agrees to publish and coordinate a monthly newsletter (Gazebo Express) to be distributed in the Town of Highland.

2. The term of this Agreement shall be for six (6) months beginning **January 1, 2026**, through **June 30, 2026**. This Agreement may be extended or renewed by the Town of Highland from month to month or for a longer term based upon approval of the renewal term by the Town.

3. Idea Factory shall be paid for its services rendered pursuant to this Agreement, the sum of \$2,600.00 per issue or \$650.00 per page stock images or illustrations at \$53.56 per image or illustration, custom photography or graphics at \$107.12 per image or graphic, as well as the website maintenance/update fees of \$145.00 per week, Web hosting fees of \$26.77 per month, Web security fees of \$133.90 per month. The weekly and monthly fees shall be payable to The Idea Factory at its business address, **602 Lexington Avenue, Crown Point, Indiana 46307**.

4. Effective July 1, 2025 Idea Factory shall be paid for its services rendered pursuant to this Agreement, the sum of \$195.00 per week for website maintenance/update fees per week. The weekly and monthly fees shall be payable to The Idea Factory at its business address, **602 Lexington Avenue, Crown Point, Indiana 46307**.

5. This Agreement may be cancelled by either party upon such party providing the other party thirty (30) days written notice.

6. In the event the Town's appropriations are insufficient to pay the expenses of this Agreement, and upon thirty (30) days written notice being given by the Town to Idea Factory, this Agreement shall become null and void.

7. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Indiana and shall be binding upon the parties' heirs, legal representatives, successors, and assigns.

8. That the Town Council President or his designee must approve a preliminary edition of the newsletter at least two weeks prior to publication.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Agreement has been entered into between the parties this 12th day January 2026.

TOWN OF HIGHLAND

THE IDEA FACTORY

By: _____
George Georgeff, President

Robin Carlascio

Attest: _____
Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer

Theresa Badovich

7. **Resolution No. 2026-02:** A Resolution Authorizing Temporary Interfund Loan or Transfer Pursuant to IC 36-1-8-4 of the Indiana Code and Section 3.20.040 of the Highland Municipal Code for the Corporation Bond and Interest Fund, the Park District Bond and Interest Fund, the Sanitary District Bond and Interest Fund and the Waterworks District Bond & Interest Fund.

Councilor Black moved the passage and adoption of Resolution No. 2026-02. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and (0) negatives. The motion passed. The resolution was adopted pending the signature of the Town Executive.

TOWN of HIGHLAND
RESOLUTION NO. 2026-02

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TEMPORARY INTERFUND LOAN or TRANSFER PURSUANT to IC 36-1-8-4 OF THE INDIANA CODE AND SECTION 3.20.040 OF THE HIGHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE FOR, THE CORPORATION BOND AND INTEREST FUND, THE PARK DISTRICT BOND AND INTEREST FUND, THE SANITARY DISTRICT BOND AND INTEREST FUND AND THE WATERWORKS DISTRICT BOND & INTEREST FUND.

Whereas, The Clerk-Treasurer has advised the Town Council that cash balances in the **Corporation Bond and Interest Fund, Park District Bond and Interest Fund, Sanitary District Bond & Interest Fund, Waterworks District Bond & Interest** are not sufficient to meet their regular expenses prior to the receipt of the semi-annual distribution of ad-valorem revenues so it has become necessary to temporarily borrow money to enhance the debt service funds;

Whereas, The Clerk-Treasurer has further advised that there is sufficient money on deposit to the credit of the **Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund** and the **Economic Development Local Income Tax Fund** that can be temporarily transferred, pursuant to IC 36-1-8-4 and HMC Section 3,20.040;

Now, Therefore Be it Resolved by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana as follows:

Section 1. That the amount of \$680,000.00 be borrowed for the **Sanitary District Bond and Interest Exempt Fund** with the amount of \$680,000.00 to be loaned by the **Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund**, as authorized by HMC Section 3.20.040 and IC 36-1-8-4;

Section 2. That said loan in the amount \$680,000.00 be repaid to the **Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund** of the Town of Highland upon receipt of sufficient tax or other monies in the **Fund** with such loan to be repaid no later than December 31, 2026, subject to IC 36-1-8-4(b).

Section 3. That the amount of \$640,000.00 be borrowed for the **Park District Bond & Interest Non-Exempt Fund** with the amount of \$640,000.00 to be loaned by the **Economic Development Local Income Tax Fund**;

Section 4. That said loan in the amount of \$640,000.00 be repaid to the **Economic Development Local Income Tax Fund** of the Town of Highland upon receipt of sufficient tax or other monies in the **Park District Bond & Interest Fund** with such loan to be repaid no later than December 31, 2026, subject to IC 36-1-8-4(b).

Section 5. That the amount of \$245,000.00 be borrowed for the **Corporation Bond & Interest Fund** with the amount of \$245,000.00 to be loaned by the **Economic Development Local Income Tax Fund**;

Section 6. That said loan in the amount of \$245,000.00 be repaid to the **Economic Development Local Income Tax Fund** of the Town of Highland upon receipt of sufficient tax or other monies in the **Corporation Bond & Interest Fund** with such loan to be repaid no later than December 31, 2026, subject to IC 36-1-8-4(b);

Section 7. That the amount of \$198,000.00 be borrowed for the **Waterworks District Bond & Interest Fund** with the amount of \$198,000.00 to be loaned by the **Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund**, by HMC Section 3.20.040 and IC 36-1-8-4;

Section 8. That said loan in the amount of \$198,000.00 be repaid to the **Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund** of the Town of Highland upon receipt of sufficient tax or other monies in the **Waterworks District Bond & Interest Fund** with such loan to be repaid no later than December 31, 2026, subject to IC 36-1-8-4(b);

Section 9. That for the temporary loans made by the Town of Highland to the Sanitary District Bond and Interest Fund, the Park District Bond and Interest Fund and the Corporation Bond & Interest Fund and the Waterworks District Bond & Interest Fund for the purposes of HMC Section 3.20.040(B)(1), this resolution shall serve as evidence of the obligation and that under Section 3.20.040(B)(4) no interest will attain.

Duly Adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, this 12th day of January 2026. Having been passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff. President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1;IC 36-5-6-5)

8. Authorize the proper officer to publish legal notice of a public hearing. If approved, the public hearing to consider the additional appropriations in the amount of \$17,500 in the Legacy Foundation Grant Fund to be held on January 26, 2026 at 6:30 P.M. O'clock in the Municipal Building, 3333 Road Highland.

Councilor Black moved to authorize the proper officer to publish legal notice as indicated. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The proper officer was authorized to publish the notice as indicated

TOWN OF HIGHLAND
NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS OF PROPOSED ADDITIONAL
APPROPRIATIONS

Notice is hereby given the taxpayers of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, that the Town Council of said Municipality in said Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, at 6:30 p.m. on the 26th day of January 2026, will consider the following additional appropriations in excess of the budget for the current year in the following funds:

Legacy Foundation Grant Fund

2404-0000-46006 Main Square Improvements	\$	17,500.00
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<i>Total for 300 Series:</i>	\$	17,500.00
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Total for the Fund: \$17,500.00

Funds to support these additional appropriations in the Legacy Foundation Grant Fund shall be supported by miscellaneous revenue, unreserved unobligated fund balance on deposit to the credit of the fund.

Taxpayers appearing at such meeting shall have a right to be heard thereon. The additional appropriations, as finally made, will be filed with the Department of Local Government Finance, for its review. The Department of Local Government Finance shall make a written determination of the sufficiency of funds within fifteen days of receipt of a certified copy of the action taken.

TOWN COUNCIL of HIGHLAND
George Georgeff, President

By: Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer

Comments from the Town Council:

(Good of the order)

- **Councilor Doug Turich:** *Metropolitan Police Commission • Liaison and Plan Commission Member • Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals Liaison • Liaison to Building & Inspection Department*

Councilor Turich was absent with prior notice. Council Scheeringa acknowledged Building Commissioner Ken Mika who gave the following report:

1/12/26 HIGHLAND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING / BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT

- Mr. Mika briefly summarized the Building Department activity (report)
- The BZA will meet on Wednesday January 28th at 6 PM. Items on that evenings agenda are the appointment of officers for 2026. A Public Hearing for a Use Variance request at 2715 Main St. for a Tattoo Studio. And a Variance request for additional signage on a commercial building located at 10343 Indianapolis Blvd.
- The PC had a Study Session last Wednesday and met with Phil Roth of Structure Point who went over a draft of the Comprehensive plan that has been in the works for the Town.

Ken Mika
Town of Highland
Building Commissioner / Zoning Administrator

Councilor Scheeringa then acknowledged Park Superintendent Tim Diamond, who said the results from the Master Plan Survey are out on the website and encouraged people to go and look at the results. He wants to people to come to the Park Board Meeting and provide input. There is a reserved spot on the agenda for residents to provide input to the five (5) year master-plan. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. He said the ABC 7 will host their annual blood drive. The field house will be closed to activities this Wednesday and Thursday to house the big ABC7 blood drive.

- **Councilor Alex Robertson:** *Fire Department Liaison • Redevelopment Commission Member • Public Works Liaison • Liaison to Main Street Bureau • Liaison to the Tree Board • Liaison to the Highland Neighbor for Sustainability.*

Council Robertson acknowledged Public Works Director Mark Knesek who said public work crews were struggling through leaf pickup. Fortunately, they didn't have any snow last night and there were no water breaks so he was able to put an extra leaf vac out today. He said they put a nice dent into the Arbor Hill area and hopefully tomorrow they will be able to complete that whole area. After Arbor Hill, crews will be moving to Zone 7. He said the problem they are experiencing is the leaves on top of the piles are dry but the leaves are still frozen on the bottom and the leaf vac will not suck them up without being broken up. He said crews are moving as fast as they can. He said making matters more difficult is that the leaves came down later this year, we had an earlier snow and during the leaf season they had a temporary crew. The temporary crew has been let go, so they are using regular employees. He reminded the Council that starting January 1, public works went on split crews. At night, crews are driving around town picking up leafed bags that the residents bagged. He said they do have three (3) leaf vacs but one is currently down.

Councilor Robertson then acknowledged Fire Chief Glenn Schlessler who reviewed the Fire Department stats for the month of December found under staff reports received and filed. He said they had fire fighters start the academy last Thursday and the remodeling project is coming to completion and the furniture is being moved back into place.

- **Councilor Tom Black:** *Redevelopment Commission Liaison and Member • Member of the Lake County Solid Waste Management District Board • Member of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIPRC) • Shared Ethics Representative • Liaison Traffic Safety*

Councilor Black acknowledged Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra who gave the following report:

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

JANUARY 12, 2026

Maria Becerra

Comprehensive Plan Update This Town wide draft was presented to the Planning Commission on January 7th, for their input and comments. The Steering Committee met January 8th to review the plan as well. We will be moving forward with revisions to work towards a final draft for a public meeting and approvals by the Planning Commission and the Town Council. This is planned for the first quarter of 2026.

Commercial Corridor Redevelopment Plan is being developed for the several parcels on the North end of Town along the Indianapolis & Kennedy Commercial Corridors. The redevelopment of some of these commercial parcels are under negotiations. The Owner of the old coach USA will be making a presentation for the Redevelopment Commission this evening on their proposed development of that parcel.

Eliminating blight – The abandoned gas station on Kennedy is under contract. The Town is completing some of the due diligence in order to close on the transaction.

Main Street – The members met January 8th, they are planning several events for the year. Starting with the downtown sidewalk sale for June 13th. There will be a 3 Big Restaurant Crawls on August 25th, September 29th and October 27th. Highway will be shut down for the August and September Crawls. There will be craft vendors and music for the August and September events. The October Big Crawl theme is “Haunting in Highland” and will partner with Park Dept for Trunk or Treat. Under the Community page - Explore Highland link is now active on the Town’s website. This has links to the local businesses that have signed up, it is free. highland.in.gov/explore-downtown-highland/ is the link. Any businesses interested in being part of the Explore Highland link, contact our dept 219 972-7598, it is free to the businesses and sponsored by Main Street.

Annual Reporting - The Redevelopment staff will begin working on the Annual Report and several reporting requirements due for this year.

Commercial Grants Just a reminder through the Redevelopment funds, the Commercial Improvement Grants are still available. Any business interested in improving the exterior or interior of their building can be eligible for 30% reimbursement of their investment. Contact the Redevelopment.

Homeownership Forgivable Loans are available for the Town’s Police Officers and Fireman along with full time Municipal employees. Sixty thousand was approved for \$10,000 each participant. This program is being funded with Gaming funds that the Town receives. The Redevelopment office will be overseeing this program.

• **Councilor Philip Scheeringa:** • *Park Board Liaison* • *Information Communications and Technology Department Liaison* • *Redevelopment Commission Member*

Councilor Scheeringa acknowledged Metropolitan Police Chief Ralph Potesta who went over the crime statistics for 2025:

Town Council Meeting Notes for 01/12/2026 – Police Department – Year End Stats - ^{% EUN} Rpt Done By EUN of Mos.
MINOR CRIME DOWN
Reported Crime: 0 Homicide
Robberies: 6 (2025) 7 (2024) 1 less in 2025
Burglaries: 10 (2025) 14 (2024) 4 less in 2025
Assaults: 98 (2025) 104 (2024) 6 less in 2025
Forcible Sex Offenses: 3 (2025) 7 (2024) 4 less in 2025
Thefts: 267 (2025) 349 (2024) 82 less in 2025
Vehicle Thefts: 10 (2025) 13 (2024) 3 less in 2025

Patrol Stats for 2025 (With comparison to 2024):

Calls for service: 9395 (2025) 9793 (2024) 398 less calls in 2025 compared to 2024
(Does not include Orth Code Enforcement Cases)

Orth Code Enforcement Cases: Approx. 2051 (2025)

Arrests down in 2025: 563 (2025) 668 (2024) 105 less arrests in 2025

Traffic Citations issued: 4554 (2025) 4773 (2024) 219 less citations issued in 2025

Written Traffic Warnings issued: 5407 (2025) 5257 (2024) 150 more warning issued in 2025

Accidents Handled: 1019 (2025) 1082 (2024) 63 less accidents handled in 2025

DUI Arrests: 106 (2025) 147 (2024) 41 less DUI arrests made in 2025

Ofc. Zachary Buss leaving...to Crown Point PD – employed just shy of 3 years here – he was a code enforcement officer with the City of Crown Point when we hired him.

He then acknowledged IT Director Ed Dabrowski, who said the BS&A Cloud project is moving along. He said last week, BS&A did a data extraction. There was quite a bit of data that had to be extracted and it took 24 hours complete the task. BS&A are in the process of compiling it to make sure that it's compliant with the cloud standards. They feel it most likely is since we are a BS&A customer but they just have to make sure it works in the cloud. He said March 9th is still the go-live date. He said he will ask that the Town Hall be closed on March 5th and 6th so the data can be down loaded and the staff trained. March 4th will be used to process payments in-house. During those days, the residents will be able to utilize cloud-based services, like pay on the web and stuff like that but we won't be able to do any process here at Town Hall.

- **Councilor George Georgeff:** *Town Executive (I.C. 36-1-2-5-(4); I.C. 36-5-2-2; I.C. 36-5-2-7); • Board of Trustees of the Police Pension Fund, Chair (By Law) • Budget Committee Chairman • Redevelopment Commission Member • Liaison to the Board of Water Works • Liaison to the Sanitary Board*

Councilor Georgeff said he will be speaking at the Chamber of Commerce Meeting tomorrow. He is going to speak on the status of the Town and future projects that are in the works. He said most of his talk was already in the Gazebo Express.

That concluded comments from the Council and President Georgeff then turned it over to comments from visitor's or residents, reminding them to limit their comments to 2 minutes.

Comments from Visitors or Residents:

Jeff Minard, Highland, said he and his wife are originally from Highland but moved away and actually lived in eight (8) different states but moved back to the area eight (8) years ago in Schererville. They moved back to Highland in October of this year. He said they are excited to be back in Highland. He said he was involved with the Town Council in Schererville by serving on the Park Board.

Councilor Georgeff asked if there were any other comments. Hearing none, he closed comments from the public and brought it back to the Council. He then asked for a motion to pay claims.

Payment of Accounts Payable Vouchers. There being no further comments from visitors or residents, Councilor Robertson moved to allow the vendors accounts payable vouchers as filed on the pending accounts payable docket, covering the period December 24, 2025 through January 13, 2026, . Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The accounts payable vouchers for the vendor docket were allowed, payments allowed in advance were ratified, the payroll dockets were ratified and for all remaining invoices, the Clerk-Treasurer was authorized to make payment.

Accounts payable vouchers December 24,2025- January 13,2026, in the amount of
\$1,059,041.44

**General Fund, \$685,747.82; MVH Fund, \$55,047.28; Law Enforce Con't Ed, \$935.84;
Public Safety Income, \$1,897.10; MCCD, \$47.98; ICT Fund, \$18,103.49; Police Pension
\$64,653.21; Insurance Premium, \$232,608.72**

Payroll Docket for payday of December 26, 2025, by fund:
General, \$343,035.09

Payroll Docket for payday of December 26, 2025:

Office of Clerk-Treasurer, \$15,485.18; Building and Inspection Department,
\$10,453.00; Metropolitan Police Department, \$162,645.14; Public Works
Department (Agency), \$86,921.40; Fire Department, \$6,405.43
and Information and Technology Department, \$4,354.35.
Total Payroll: \$286,264.50

Payroll Docket for payday of December 31,2025 by fund:
Total Payroll by fund: \$79,194.11

Payroll Docket for payday of December 31,2025:

Boards & Commissions. \$13,607.62; Police Pension, \$64,545.56
Total Payroll: \$78,153.18

Payroll Docket for payday of January 9, 2026, 2026, by fund:
General, \$387,205.73

Payroll Docket for payday January 9, 2026:

Office of Clerk-Treasurer, \$15,687.03; Building and Inspection Department,
\$9,220.29; Metropolitan Police Department, \$165,142.87; Public Works
Department (Agency), \$87,557.48; Fire Department, \$6180.30 and
Information and Technology Department, \$4,354.35.
Total Payroll: \$288,145.32

Adjournment of Plenary Meeting. There being no further business on the agenda, the Town
Council President declared the regular plenary meeting of the Town Council of Monday,
January 12, 2026, adjourned at 7:15 o'clock p.m.

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved by the Town Council at its meeting of January 26, 2026.

