

**Enrolled Memorandum of the Meeting
Study Session/Meeting (In person)
Thirtieth Town Council of Highland
Monday, January 26, 2026**

The Thirtieth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met in a study session on **Monday, January 26, 2026**, immediately after the adjournment of the January 25, 2026 Plenary Meeting (7:15 O'clock P.M.), in the regular place, the Highland Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana.

****Pursuant to Enrolled House Bill 1167, this meeting is convened as an in person meeting and live 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. If you are in the audience and unwilling to be recorded and live streamed, we ask you to depart the meeting now, otherwise your continued presence is your consent to be recorded and live streamed.**

***All Councilors were simultaneously seen and heard. Councilor George Georgeff, Councilor Doug Turich; Councilor Alex Robertson, Councilor Tom Black and Councilor Philip Scheeringa all participated in person.**

Silent Roll Call: Councilors George Georgeff, Doug Turich, Alex Robertson, Tom Black and Philip Scheeringa were present in person as indicated. The Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak was present to memorialize the proceedings. *A quorum was attained.*

Officials Present: IT Director Ed Dabrowski, Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra were in person.

x. Discussion: Appointments.

Unless otherwise noted, all terms expire on the 1st Monday in January 2026 and or until a successor is appointed or qualified, not exceeding ninety (90) days.

• Statutory Boards and Commissions

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

• Regional Statutory Appointments

Home Rule Commissions or Boards

- 1. Tree Board.** (2) Appointments to be nominated by the Town Council but appointed by the Town Council President. *(Note: Currently held by James Colias and Ron Jackowski, term ending 1st Monday January 2026) Term is for three (3) years James Colias; Ron Jackowski)*

- 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.)*

• **Legislative Appointments**

1. **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.)*
2. **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)*

• **Regional Statutory Appointments**

• **Home Rule Commissions or Boards**

1. **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.*
(Note: Current Appointees are: Diane Barr-Roumbus, James Roumbus, Sandy McKnight, Al Simmons, Sandy Ray, Ben Tomera, and Desiree Biro, term ending 1st Monday January 2027).Term is for two (2) years.

x. Discussion: 2026 Appointments:

The Clerk-Treasurer passed out the list of the appointments still not filled as of today's study session. The Council decided to schedule a special meeting on Saturday, March 7, 2026 to conduct interview in the Community Room of the Police Station. The Clerk-Treasurer said he will arrange the interview schedule.

Community Events Commission – 2 (appointed by the Park Board)
No party affiliation required

Applications received:
Jennifer Gooldy
Noel Zemaitis

Lake County Council Appointment – 1 (resignation of Dave Beanblossom)

Park Board – 1 – R, 1-D
Omar Torres (R) – 4 year term
Legislative Appointment
Nick Russo (D) – term expires 1st Monday in 2027

Legislative Appointment

Letter received for reappointment:
Omar Torres

Applications received:
Jeff Minard - R
Jennifer Gooldy - D
James Wedryk - D
Deborah Trevino - D
Noel Zemaitis - party not filled in
Matt Hanft - D

Police Commission - 1 - D - (3 year appointment)
Terry Krooswyk (D) - 3 year term
Legislative Appointment

Letter received for reappointment:
Terry Krooswyk

Applications received:
Michael Berry - D
Deborah Trevino - D
Noel Zemaitis - party not filled in

Tree Board - 2 - No party affiliation required (3 year appointment)
James Colias
Executive Appointment

Ron Jackowski
Executive Appointment

Applications received:
Noel Zemaitis
Teresa Lekan
David Taylor

The Council asked the Clerk-Treasurer to reach out to those who had submitted applications, arranging for interviews on Saturday, February 7th, starting at 8:30 o'clock a.m., in the Community Room of the police department. Each applicant was asked to submit a paragraph or 2, stating why they applied for the certain position and what they would bring to the table if selected and why are they the best candidate.

- x. **Discussion: Proposed Ordinance No. 1845:** 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, particularly creating a Residency Stipend Provision in the Public Works Department (Agency) and the Parks and Recreation Department.

**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 in favor and 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 in favor and 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)

- x. **Discussion: 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).

**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 in favor and 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 in favor and 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)

Councilor Robertson began by saying if we open it to everybody, then isn't it defeating the purpose of why we're doing it in the first place which is to incentivize our employees to move to Highland. He said we are trying to get employees to move to Highland so they can respond to emergencies thereby decreasing response time.

Councilor Scheeringa said we just need to change the language so that it's not a blanket across the departments.

Councilor Robertson said he talked to Public Works Director Knesek on how many of his employees he felt should be incentivized and his recommendation was that entire department because everybody does respond when they're is an emergency. As we discussed at the last meeting we were to go back to the departments which we are

liaisons to and ask the question. So, I verified with him and that was his recommendation which I shared with you.

Councilor Scheeringa said he spoke with the Park Superintendent, Tim Diamond and he said Tim responded that he did not see it as feasible at this time. Tim's suggestion was rather than a residency stipend, it would be more effective to stick with the call-out pay which was approved at the previous meeting. He said only a handful of park employees actually respond to emergencies.

Councilor Turich said when he made the recommendation, only one person that he is aware of responds to emergencies, not the whole department.

Councilor Scheeringa said but there are actually twelve (12) employees who live in town and would qualify for the residency stipend. He said it is written such that all employees who live in town would qualify for the stipend, regardless if they respond to emergencies or not.

Councilor Turich said his understanding that the residency stipend would only offered those employees who responds to emergencies.

Councilor Robertson told Councilor Turich that he is confusing the term residency stipend and call-out pay. He said the Council approved call out or on-call pay for park department employees at our last meeting. What we are talking about here is the residency stipend. He said the way it is written, all the park employees and not just Trever would receive a residency stipend whether they respond to emergencies or not.

Councilor Turich said the language needs to be amended.

Councilor Robertson said he agreed and that is why he asked that Ordinance No. 1845 and 1842-B, not be passed at our last meeting but refer to them to tonight's study session so we could discuss as a group. He said that was the point of going back to the department heads and determine who should be given residency pay based upon the criteria of the employee responding to emergencies. He said that is what Councilor Scheeringa and I did.

Councilor Turich said he find it hard to believe that every person at the public works level responds to emergencies and are entitled to receive a residency stipend. The same with the Parks Department. Not every employee responds to emergencies and therefore should not be entitled to a residency stipend. Its not right if you grant it to Public Works employees and then not the Park Department employees. If that's the case, why wouldn't we do it for Ed Dabrowski or the Fire Department.

Councilor Scheeringa said he agrees but the way it is written, it applies to everyone and totally blows his budget.

Councilor Turich how many employees are in public works and would this apply to?

Councilor Robertson said public works is roughly 28 employees and 12 employees would be eligible.

Councilor Turich asked how much do the employees receive for the residency stipend.

Councilor Robertson advised \$2,400 annually.

Councilor Turich said that would be \$30,000 annually and did Public Works budget for it. He was advised no, it was not budgeted. No one budgeted for it except the police.

Councilor Robertson said we need to be consistent with all departments and only offer the residency stipend if they respond to emergencies. This is different that call-out pay, as an employee who receives call-out pay, does not have to live in Highland but has to respond when called out. Examples given were being called out to plow snow or fix a water main break. And those individuals are being consistently called in and live in Highland should be eligible for the residency stipend.

Councilor Black said here's my challenge and asked does salaried employee receive the standby pay? He was advised the answer was no and he felt the salaried employees, should be the ones required to come in and receive the residency stipend. He felt the hourly employees are compensated for being on-call., so why not get rid of the residency stipend, convert the residency stipend to hourly and increase the call-out pay for those who live in Highland.

Councilor Turich asked Metropolitan Police Chief Ralph Potesta if he received a residency stipend. He respond yes. He felt that the department heads are compensated with their salaries and are expected to put more than 40 hours in a given week. He felt all 28 employees in public works should qualify for the residency stipend but Ed Dabrowski should qualify for call-out pay.


Councilor Georgeff established a committee of Councilor's Turich, Robertson and Scheeringa. They were to meet with the department head in identifying which employees could possibly be called out for an emergency, report back to the whole Council with their recommendations so the ordinances could be amended.

- x. Discussion: **Works Board Order No. 2026-02:** 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 the balance of 2026.

The Clerk-Treasurer said he tried to incorporate the discussion at the previous study session into Works Board Order No. 2026-02 but several questions remain, which is why it is on the study session agenda.

The Clerk-Treasurer began by recapping the discussion from the previous meeting. He said March and April would be bi-monthly, May, June and July would be single issues with a QR code for the residents to scan if they are okay with scanning the Gazebo rather than having a physical copy in their possession. The QR Code would allow the Idea Factory to track how many residents are reading the Gazebo online. Depending upon the results, then starting in August, the Gazebo would be digital. He said he received a phone call from Teresa who said the single issue in December would be too late to let the residents know about the Santa March, the tree lighting the Pumpkin Plod. Those dates need to be in the November issue. She had suggested, August also be a single issue and September, October and November, December be bi-monthly.

Theresa Badovich passed out a revised 2026 contract worksheet and a two-sided document that showed all of the events that happen in the various months and is reported in the Gazebo. She said this is mandatory content. She said this does not include the new stories that may arise during the year that the Council wants reported.

	THERESA BADOVICH theresa@theideafactory.us.com 219.669.8312
	ROBIN CARLASCIO robin@theideafactory.us.com 219.831.0634

To:
Highland Clerk-Treasurer Mark Herak
Highland IT Director Ed Dabrowski
Highland Town Council

From: The Idea Factory

Subject: 2026 Contract

**No raise in price from our 2025 contract.
Includes bimonthly newsletter with 6 issues:**

- Gazebo Express newsletter: \$2,600 per issue or \$650 per page
- Stock images: \$53.56 per image or illustration
- Custom graphics/photography: \$107.12 per image or illustration


- Website maintenance/updates: \$195 per week
- Web hosting: \$26.77 a month
- Web security: \$133.90 a month

Pricing for monthly newsletter with 10 remaining issues:

- Gazebo Express newsletter: \$2,000 per issue or \$500 per page
- Stock images: \$53.56 per image or illustration
- Custom graphics/photography: \$107.12 per image or illustration

- Website maintenance/updates: \$195 per week
- Web hosting: \$26.77 a month
- Web security: \$133.90 a month

Please note: If additional work is required, it will be carried out with mutually agreeable terms and conditions.

	THERESA BADOVICH theresa@theideafactory.us.com 219.669.8312
	ROBIN CARLASCIO robin@theideafactory.us.com 219.831.0634

January

Business License Renewal
Animal License Renewal
Snow Parking Ban
Crime Watch Meeting - January 14
Restaurant Crawl - January 27

February

Snow Parking Ban
Restaurant Crawl - February 24
Daddy-Daughter Dance - March 7

March

Crime Watch Meeting - March 13
Breakfast with the Bunny - March 14
Community Band Concert - March 18
Bunny's Trail Adventure - March 20
Easter Egg Hunt - March 28
Restaurant Crawl - March 31

April

LeaF and branch pickup -
first two weeks of April
Arbor Day - April 24
Park Cleanup Day - April 25
Drug Take Back - April 25
Restaurant Crawl - April 28
Spring Fling Market - May 2

May


Crime Watch Meeting - May 13
Police Memorial - May
Community Band Concert - May 20
Restaurant Crawl - May 26
Memorial Day Ceremony - May 25
Community Garden Planting Day - May
Spring Cleanup Day - May xx
Townwide Yard Sale - May 29-30
Summer Concert Series - May-August
Movies in the Park - May
Summer Camp - June 1 - August 7

June

Fourth of July Festival - July 1-5
- special issue with center spread
Summer Concert Series - May-August
Sidewalk Sale - June 13
Highland Shred Day - June 21
Restaurant Crawl - June 30

July

Movies in the Park - July
Fishing Derby - July
Hazardous Waste Day - July xx
Restaurant Crawl - July 28
Summer Theatre - July 24, 25, 30, Aug 1
Summer Concert Series - May-August
Rotary Corn Roast - August 1

	ONE COURTHOUSE SQUARE SUITE 207 CROWN POINT, IN 46307	THERESA BADOVICH theresa@theideafactory.us.com 219.669.8312
		ROBIN CARLASCIO robin@theideafactory.us.com 219.831.0634

August

Townwide Yard Sale - August 21-22
Summer Concert Series - May-August
Movies in the Park - August
Big Crawl - August 25

September

Leaf Collection insert
Migration Celebration - September 12
Crime Watch Meeting - September 9
Backyard BBQ - September 26-28
Big Crawl - September 29

October

Highland Fright Ride - October 10
Fall Cleanup Day - October 21
Drug Take Back - April 26
Haunted Crawl - October 27
Trunk or Treat - October 27
Trick or Treating - October 31
Pumpkin Smash - November 8

November

Veterans Day Ceremony - November 11
Shop Local - November push
Crime Watch Meeting - November 11
Restaurant Crawl - November 24
Pumpkin Plod - November 26
Santa Parade - November 28
Christmas Tree Lighting - November 28
Letter from Santa
Holiday Home Decorating Contest -
November-December
Holiday Firetruck - December 5 and 12
Toys for Tots - December 4
Shop with a Firefighter - December 4
Christmas Cops & Kids - December 4

December

Recycling Insert
Fireside Frostival - December 12
Restaurant Crawl - December 29
New Year's Fireworks - December 31
Twelfth Night - January 6

The Clerk-Treasurer said we know that March and April will be a bi-monthly and May, June and July will be single issue but not knowing the results from the QR surveys, we don't know if starting in August will be digital or a printed copy of the Gazebo. The per page price is the same if it is digital or printed. The Town saves on the printing costs if the Gazebo is digital. By going to the single issue, the per page cost goes down.

Councilor Robertson said he would be in favor of ripping the Band-Aid off and just going digital.

Councilors Georgeff and Scheeringa said the senior citizens want to receive a paper copy. They were concerned the seniors won't go on line to read it but simply not read the Gazebo.

Councilor Turich asked why in the handout containing the mandatory items, why wouldn't the snow parking ban be in the October Gazebo, ahead of the snow.

Teresa said that they actually start online on the website regarding the snow parking ban. She said they have a slider that appears in the fall. She said they could start a little earlier if the Council wants.

It was decided that May, June, July and August would be single issues and the bi-monthly issues would September, October and November, December. It wasn't determined if those issues would be digital or printed. The May, June and July issues would be printed with a QR code attached. It would be a simply question asking the residents if they are okay to click on the QR code and read the Gazebo digitally.

Teresa asked the Council if they foresaw the digital file being delivered to their inbox? If so, they you would have to set up the residents in something like a constant contact where the residents would be required to subscribe. Rather she envisioned the QR code being mailed to the residents as part of their monthly utility bill. All the resident would have to do is click and scan the code and will be taken to the PDF version on line.

Councilor Georgeff asked how do you measure the baseline? He wanted to know how many people looked at the paper copy?

Councilor Robertson said that is why August would be digital only and that will determine how many people click, scanned and read the PDF version of the Gazebo. He said that is why May, June and July will be paper copies with the QR code attached.

Councilor Georgeff said that are some folks that don't have the technology or the means to scan and check, yes, I want it as a hard copy, so we'll miss their input. He said he understands that digital will save money by avoiding printing costs but if we go entirely digital, there are some residents who won't get it anymore and I don't want to exclude people from receiving the Gazebo.

Councilor Turich said we will receive complaints via emails or phone calls and he said he would rather avoid that. I realize that it will save us money but its only a few hundred bucks and there are other areas we could save money.

**The Town of Highland
Board of Works
Order of the Works Board No. 2026-02**

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 March 2026 through to 31 January 2027* as described herein is hereby approved, adopted and ratified in each and every respect;

Section 2. The prices listed in Section 2, applies to all issues produced from 1 March 2026 through 31 January 2027; 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. The prices listed in Section 4, applies to the March/April issue. 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 bi-monthly newsletter to be distributed as an insert in a utility invoice and other related services;

Section 5. The prices listed in Section 5, applies to the May, June and July single issues, with a QR code on the physical issue. That the charges under the agreement for the services, in the amount of *\$2,000.00 per issue*, or *\$500.00* 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;

Section 6. The prices listed in Section 6, applies to the August, September, October and November issues which will either be bi-monthly issues with charges for services, in the amount of *\$2,600.00 per issue*, or *\$650.00* per page, which include publishing and coordinating a bi-monthly newsletter to be distributed as an insert in the monthly utility invoice and other related services; or

August, September, October and November will be monthly issues, all electronic with no-printing or coordinating an insert in the monthly utility invoice, with charges for services, in the amount of *\$2,000.00 per issue*, or *\$500.00* per page;

Section 7. The prices listed in Section 7, applies to December's single issue, which will be either published and inserted in the monthly utility invoice or will

be electronic with no-printing or coordinating an insert in the monthly utility invoice. That the charges under the agreement for the services, in the amount of \$2,000.00 per issue, or \$500.00 per page;

Section 8. 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 9. 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 10. 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 9th day of February 2026 having passed by a vote of ____ in favor and ____ 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 9th day of February 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 the creation and coordinating a monthly or bi-monthly newsletter (Gazebo Express) to be

either published and distributed throughout the Town in the utility invoice or create the format to be distributed electronically throughout the Town; and

WHEREAS, Idea Factory is interested in entering into such an agreement and engaging its services for the creation and coordinating a monthly or bi-monthly newsletter (Gazebo Express) to be either published and distributed throughout the Town within the utility invoice or create the format to be distributed electronically throughout 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 the create and coordinating a monthly or bi-monthly newsletter (Gazebo Express) to be either published and distributed throughout the Town within the mailing of utility invoice or create the format to be distributed electronically throughout the Town; and

2. The term of this Agreement shall be from **March 1, 2026**, through **January 1, 2027**. 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. 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**.

4. The prices listed in Section 2, applies to all issues produced from 1 March 2026 through 31 January 2027; 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;

5. Idea Factory shall be paid for its services rendered pursuant to this Agreement, for bi-monthly issues, the sum of \$2,600.00 per issue or \$650.00 per page; which include publishing and coordinating a bi-monthly newsletter to be distributed as an insert in the monthly utility invoice and other related services; or

6. Idea Factory shall be paid for its services rendered pursuant to this Agreement, for monthly issues, the sum of \$2,000.00 per issue or \$500.00 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; or

7. Idea Factory shall be paid for its services rendered pursuant to this Agreement, for monthly issues, the sum of \$2,000.00 per issue or \$500.00 per page; which include creating the format to be distributed electronically throughout the Town; and

8. 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 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 9th day February 2026.

TOWN OF HIGHLAND

THE IDEA FACTORY

By: _____
George Georgeff, President

Robin Carlascio

Attest: _____
Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer

Theresa Badovich

- x. Discussion: Consent Agendas (used in Merrillville & Fishers): still requires a motion to adopt and seconded. Any Councilor can ask that any item on the Consent Agenda be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the regular agenda. A consent agenda groups routine, non-controversial items (like meeting minutes, standard reports, or routine appointments) into a single package, allowing them to be approved with one collective motion and vote.

Councilor Robertson explained to the Council what was meant by a Consent Agenda and how it operates. The Council had many questions and asked the

Clerk-Treasurer if he couldn't get a copy of an agenda from either the Town of Fishers or the Town of Merrillville and have it for the next study session and revisit the topic then.

Plenary Business Meeting of Monday February 9, 2026

- Minutes of the Meeting of Monday, January 26, 2026.
- Accounts Payable Voucher
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