

**HIGHLAND, ILLINOIS
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
CITY HALL, 1115 BROADWAY
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2021
12:00 PM**

Call to Order:

The August 4, 2021, meeting of the Industrial Development Commission was called to order at 12:06 PM by Vice-Chairman Diane Korte-Lindsey.

Roll Call:

Members present: Vice-Chairman Diane Korte-Lindsey; Marshall Rinderer, and Josh Kloss.
Members absent: Chairman Jim Meridith and Jon Greve

Also present: Mayor Kevin B. Hemann, City Manager Chris Conrad, Director of Community Development Breann Vazquez; Economic & Business Retention Coordinator Mallord Hubbard; Holly's House of Hope Director Dr. Duff Wrobel, and, Recording Secretary Lana Hediger.

Approval of Minutes:

Josh Kloss made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2021, Regular Session meeting of the Industrial Development Commission; seconded by Marshall Rinderer. All members voted aye; none voted no; the motion carried.

Josh Kloss made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2021, Regular Session meeting of the Industrial Development Commission; seconded by Marshall Rinderer. All members voted aye; none voted no; the motion carried.

Reports:

Treasurer's Report – Jon Greve

City Manager Conrad reported the balance in the IDC account at First Mid Bank as of July 31, 2021, was \$57,544.93. There were no transactions during the month. Rinderer made a motion to approve the treasurer's report; seconded by Kloss. All members voted aye; none voted no; the motion carried.

Update on job inquiries

Breann Vazquez reported the following:

- Schlafly shooting to open for business in early October. Construction is going according to schedule. They are not anticipating any materials delays.
- Scooters Coffee is also going well. They expect to complete construction around the middle of August. They will be training for a couple of weeks and are shooting to open at the beginning of September.
- Plaza Park (next to Schlafly)...the restrooms have been set into place and hopefully will be operational by tomorrow, July 8, 2021. Sidewalks will need

to be poured to access them. The park space will be developing as Schlafly completes their construction.

- The Public Safety Building is moving along. The holdup right now is getting interior doors. City Manager Conrad added that they should be getting their certificate of substantial completion by the week of August 16. That will allow us to move some city workers in there to do their move-in prep.

City Manager Conrad reported the following recent business transactions:

- EF Trucking was purchased by Sutton Transport.
- Oberbeck Grain was sold to TopAg.
- Journal Printing is for sale, and some developers will be looking at it.

Mallord Hubbard reported the following:

- Several business have expressed interest in the city's Façade Program.
- There are also other businesses near the square that are looking to either upgrade their buildings or just reinvest back into their businesses.

Rinderer asked about the Cypress Restaurant building. Director Vazquez updated the members about it, stating that the owner had petitioned the city to allow it to be converted into residential units. Staff indicated that it would make sense to maintain it as a commercial property since it is on an arterial street. The Combined Planning & Zoning Board held a public hearing and recommended to the City Council that the application be denied. Subsequently, the City Council voted to deny the application. Rinderer pointed out how difficult it would be to get someone interested in maintaining it as a restaurant. Vazquez pointed out that it would be a major undertaking and a financial drain to bring it up to code as apartments, too.

Update on Highland Communication Services – Mallord Hubbard

Mallord reported that HCS now has 2,635 customers and ViTV subscriber count is up to 300; up from 230 last month. All indications from Director Imming are that the ViTV rollout is going very well. City Manager Conrad mentioned that there are some lower-value models of TV's (TCL's) available through Wal-Mart are having difficulty running the app services.

Update on COVID-19 Disaster Initiatives – Mallord Hubbard

Mallord reported that the Highland Music School is the newest E-Commerce Grant applicant. Once her upgrade is complete, the IDC will be asked to approve payout of the grant funds.

Holly's House of Hope

Dr. Wrobel of Holly's House of Hope reported that his daughter Holly has Down's Syndrome. She always wanted to work in a clothing store. When the time came, nobody wanted to hire her. She worked at the Highland Hope Methodist Church and the Mosaic Church Free Store. This led to the development of Holly's House of Hope to provide opportunities for more exceptional people like Holly. In Illinois there are no opportunities for the uniquely-abled. One place in Breese will allow them to work for them if you pay them \$1,400 per month.

The free store is used as a training program to build their skills. Then they try to find placements for them. They accept gently used items of clothing and household goods. They have worked with the Highland Garden Club at the Glik Park gardens, HIS Kids, and they served at the opening of the Highland Senior Center.

Dr. Wrobel is working with Mark Rosen to develop job descriptions. He can then take those to Madison County and they can be approved as apprenticeships. They can be tailored around locations rather than around specific job titles (i.e. instead of being an apprentice electrician, you can be an apprentice for the city hall building. That allows them to construct jobs from parts of other jobs. Once this is approved as an apprenticeship through Madison County, the county will pay 50% of the salary while they are in the apprenticeship, which is 2,000 hours. Basically it equates to a part-time employee, at half of minimum wage, for about two years, which is very cost effective. It also requires in-house training, but that is one of the things that Holly's House of Hope provides.

Once this becomes an actual official apprenticeship, then they can go to the state, to vocational rehab. Vocational Rehab services will provide a job coach for someone with a disability at no charge for up to 18 months.

Nobody at the state level knew how to develop a functioning model of this idea. That is what Dr. Wrobel is doing.

Right now they are developing several fund raisers and exploring some corporate partnerships. There are several grant applications in the works.

The Rehberger Chiropractic office has been remodeled. The numerous sinks and medicine cabinets have been sold to a bed and breakfast in Joplin, MO, that was looking for period fixtures for their remodel. The bathrooms have been replumbed and made ADA compliant and it has been cleared of all asbestos. They are renting out the front office space to a business from Belleville that does enrichment services for adults with autism. This is their second office.

The next thing they are working on is transportation...how to take advantage of the MadCo Senior Citizen bus.

Holly comes to work every day and says, "I love my job." She has been putting clothes on hangars for two years now.

Dr. Wrobel is still working out some details. The most interesting thing they are doing here is developing the model that can then be transported to other cities. Right now they are holding their cases to three, until they are able to accomplish their first outplacements and they are working well. The school is also participating by providing job coaches.

Diane asked how the IDC can be helpful. Dr. Wrobel indicated that perhaps they can help develop a corporate sponsorship program. The whole idea is to give the participants a little more autonomy. He believes that the city of Highland was the good place to start. This is people helping people who know how slowly the wheels of government work. Perhaps the IDC could help connect people for future relationships.

Mallord indicated that the IDC could really act as a liaison between Holly's House of Hope and the rest of the community.

Apprenticeship = 2,000 hours in one year. The state and county are on board, to ultimately make more taxpayers.

There was a brief discussion about the number of hours to be worked and how they would structure a work week.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Industrial Development Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, September 1, 2021.

Adjournment

Marshal Rinderer made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Josh Kloss. All members voted aye; none voted no. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 12:55 PM.