

**HIGHLAND, ILLINOIS
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING, 12990 TROXLER AVENUE
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023
12:00 PM**

Call to Order:

The December 6, 2023, meeting of the Industrial Development Commission was called to order at 12:07 PM by Chairman Jim Meridith.

Roll Call:

Members present: Chairman Jim Meridith; Marshall Rinderer, Josh Kloss, and Treasurer Jon Greve.

Members absent: Diane Korte-Lindsey.

Also present: Economic Development Coordinator Mallord Hubbard; City Manager Chris Conrad and Recording Secretary Lana Hediger.

Approval of Minutes:

Marshall Rinderer made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2023, Regular Session meeting of the Industrial Development Commission; seconded by Josh Kloss. All members voted aye; none voted no; the motion carried.

Reports:

Treasurer's Report – Jon Greve

Treasurer Jon Greve reported the total amount of IDC assets is \$51,520.11, which includes bank account balance of \$26,520.11 and one Certificate of Deposit for \$25,000. The only transaction was a \$1,000 donation payment to the CEO program. He noted that the CD is maturing and suggested renewing it.

Jon Greve made a motion to renew the CD for \$25,000 for one year or less; seconded by Josh Kloss. All members voted aye; none voted no; the motion carried. Rates for CD's are currently at 5% - 5 ¼%.

Updates on Developments and other City Projects – Staff

Mallord Hubbard reported that the one item that will be heard at the Combined Planning and Zoning Board meeting is the request for a Special Use Permit to allow a short-term rental in the upstairs of 1014 Laurel Street, the former Journal Printing building. The ground floor will be home to the Gauchos Restaurant. No opening date has been set for the restaurant but they are hoping to be open sooner than later.

A couple of items that were on the CPZB agenda for this evening which have been removed, are related to the upcoming solar field project on Highland Road. The solar company that the Steiner's are working with requested to remove the items to give them more time to work up their site plan. The Steiner's are moving forward with annexation of

the property. When the site plan is ready, they will resubmit their application for rezoning and a special use permit. There is language in the annexation agreement that will allow the owners to disconnect from the city if the solar field does not get constructed.

The buildout on the new Pizza Hut has begun. The contractor had previously told us the project would take about eight weeks, so we are anticipating the new operator will open sometime in January.

We are very happy that Shoe Sensation opened the week before Thanksgiving and they have been satisfied with their response from the community so far. They will be having their ribbon cutting this Friday (12/8/2023).

The building that Roy Wells owns next to the Lory Theater was torn down yesterday. This started rumors that other buildings around the square were slated for demolition as well, which is not the case.

Josh Kloss asked about the future of the building that previously housed the Yogi's restaurant. Mallord indicated that the owner may have a potential tenant identified. They are not prepared to make an announcement about that yet, but it looks like they may have that building filled within the near future.

City Manager Conrad added that with regard to the demolition of the building on Main Street, as was the case with the Eagle Inn, both buildings were painted with a particular kind of paint sometime in the 1950's that caused their demise. It was found in both buildings that the brick was crumbling behind that paint. Any rehabilitation of the building would have been unsafe.

Update on Monthly Tax Revenues

City Manager Conrad reported on tax revenues received in November.

- Sales Tax: We received \$303,780 which is about \$8,000 over last month.
- Non-Home Rule Sales tax: We received \$171,199 which is about \$10,000 over last month.
- Business District Tax: This was flat for the month, so we're not seeing any growth there.
- Income Tax: This month it was \$116,622 which is up about 14% over this month last year. For the year, this is down about \$15,000 total. This was actually a good month because last month we were down about \$30,000 for the year.
- Use Tax: We received \$30,337 which is flat compared to last month.
- Telecom Tax (Excise Tax): We received \$9,000 which is down slightly.
- Both the Marijuana Tax and Gaming were flat.

Update on Highland Communication Services – Staff

City Manager Conrad reported that HCS currently has 2668 customers. Revenues have ticked up approximately \$4,000 - \$5,000 per month from some of the changes we have made. We have offered a broader tier of options for data. There are inexpensive lower tiers and tiers that provide up to 2.5 gigabit speed. There are a few residents that work

from home in highly technical fields that have taken the 2.5 gig tier. We are down 30 customers in TV, which we thought would be more. We have about 700 TV customers.

EMS Revenue/Collections Update

City Manager Conrad reported that about 18 months ago, the city implemented a new billing software for Emergency Medical Services. Most of the services around us contract out their billing. In discussions we have had with surrounding agencies over the past few years in an effort to find a solution to EMS funding, we found that our collection rate prior to the software change was from 7 – 15% higher than the rest. So far this year, which is the first full year on the new software, which automates more of the billing and coding which means less errors and staff time to deal with errors, and more accurate bills which means more accurate payments from insurance companies and Medicare and Medicaid, we have seen about a 40% increase in our collections. I am still working on the data to see how that translates into our collection rate. EMS systems are failing at a much more rapid rate than anyone anticipated, due mainly to bad legislative policy decision at the federal level which was implemented in 2006 that concern Medicare and Medicaid.

Update on Workforce Development Initiatives – Mallord Hubbard

Mallord Hubbard reported that the IDC is supporting this year's Collinsville/Triad CEO program. Four students from Highland High School participate in this. This past weekend, they threw a Frost-fest festival in Highland, which included a 5k fun, games, a raffle, and a breakfast. We don't have an accounting of their success yet, but all indications point to a great turnout. This semester they will be focusing on their own businesses, working with mentors. The semester will culminate in a trade show where they will each be highlighting their businesses. There will be an investor breakfast where they will present a review of their activities for the year. Hopefully, the IDC members will be invited to attend. Mallord believes the IDC's support of the CEO program was a wise investment and looks forward to the members realizing that for themselves as they have more interaction with the students.

New Business:

Update on Extension/Creation of TIF Districts

Mallord indicated that the HCUSD #5 has offered their support of the city's efforts with the TIF districts.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Industrial Development Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, January 3, 2024.

Adjournment

Marshall Rinderer made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Jon Greve. All members voted aye; none voted no. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 12:28 PM.