

**HIGHLAND, ILLINOIS  
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING, 12990 TROXLER AVENUE  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2023  
12:00 PM**

**Call to Order:**

The January 3, 2024, meeting of the Industrial Development Commission was called to order at 12:07 PM by Vice-Chairman Diane Korte-Lindsey.

**Roll Call:**

Members present: Vice-Chairman Diane Korte-Lindsey; Treasurer Jon Greve; and, Marshall Rinderer. Ex-officio member, Highland Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Hillarie Holzinger was also present

Members absent: Chairman Jim Meridith; and, Josh Kloss.

Also present: Economic Development Coordinator Mallord Hubbard; City Manager Chris Conrad; Recording Secretary Lana Hediger; and, one member of the public.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Marshall Rinderer made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2023, Regular Session meeting of the Industrial Development Commission; seconded by Jon Greve. All members voted aye; none voted no; the motion carried.

**Reports:**

**Treasurer's Report – Jon Greve**

Jon Greve reported that there was no change to the account balances since last month. Interest from the mature CD is pending. \$25,000 was invested into a new CD. The rate will be provided at the next meeting.

**Updates on Developments and other City Projects – Staff**

Mallord Hubbard reported that there is no meeting of the Combined Planning & Zoning Board for this evening. With regard to their February 7 meeting, one application for a variance has been received, which is not something that will concern the IDC.

Pizza Hut is expected to open on February 4.

There are still several projects in progress on the square. The Wells projects are continuing to make progress.

The former Giving Tree had their ribbon cutting through the Chamber of Commerce last month. They still have plans to make exterior upgrades to that building.

The Gauchos Argentinian Restaurant at 1014 Laurel Street is nearing completion. They had a get together there on New Year's Eve. It looks as though the interior is almost finished. We expect that they will submit their application for a liquor license soon. Hopefully, by the next IDC meeting we will have an update on when they may open.

We continue to make progress on our TIF efforts. Last month we reported that the school board voted to support our efforts and have provided a letter of support to both extend TIFs 1 and 2, and establish TIF 3. We have requested letters of support from the other taxing bodies including the Townships, the county, and SWIC. In order to have our application included in the spring legislative session, we need to have all of our letters of support by January 9. We are attempting to make that deadline. We will update you again at the next meeting.

Chris Conrad updated the members on the city hall renovations, noting an issue with the plasterer. HVAC units were put in place the week of Christmas and the ductwork is being installed now. The offices have been plastered and painted and we are waiting on interior doors. The new vestibule has been framed. All new windows have been installed. Once the offices are completed, we will prepare a change order for work to be done to the council chambers, lighting and sound issues to be improved.

Diane asked if the Wedding Belle is moving into the former Yogi's building. Hillarie Holzinger confirmed it is and they have an open house planned for February 3 and 4.

Mallord reported that he is prioritizing a plan for this year to bring the square businesses/owners together to market the square and all the improvements that have taken place.

#### **Update on Highland Communication Services – Staff**

City Manager Conrad reported that HCS currently has 2668 customers. There are 16 additional TV customers. We are now offering a 2 gigabit upload/download option, and are seeing a migration from the lower speed data plans to the higher speeds. We may eliminate the lower speed tiers. All the system build out is done with the exception of a few minor residential items in the last area.

#### **Update on Workforce Development Initiatives – Mallord Hubbard**

Mallord reported that because the IDC is serving as a sponsor of this year's CEO program, he is serving as a mentor paired with a Highland High School student. The students are creating their individual businesses now, after having conducted a successful class business consisting of a 5K and a festival of games at the Highland Elementary School. Mallord will seek ways to involve the IDC in the process of helping the students develop their skills and their individual businesses during the spring semester.

Jon Greve asked for an update on the FEMA Floodplain Maps issue. Chris Conrad indicated that there was a meeting with FEMA recently to discuss that because we were contesting their elevations. That meeting is when they notified staff that they have changed their method of determining the flood elevations from a measurement of a certain amount of rainfall over a 24 hour period to a certain amount of rainfall in a 2 hour event. The rains we are experiencing are fewer in number but heavier intensity in a shorter duration. The data supports what they are doing. So, all we can do is work toward mitigation solutions. It looks like the maps will be adopted. We will install mitigation projects and then reapply to get the maps reduced.

### **Updated report on local housing market**

Diane reported that local and county markets have slowed, due to the reduced number of homes available for sale. Data is available through the end of November.

She indicated that there were 17 homes for sale in the 62249 zip code, which was down 29% from 2022. Homes are still selling over listing price. Interest rates have come down a bit. Diane indicated there is no better time to sell your home.

There are not as many townhouses or condos on the market. There have actually been three sold this year compared to one last year.

Average sale price has come down, but just because a few smaller homes have sold. Average sale price in the county is up 10.2%. The percentage of list price is off a bit, but still very strong.

Days on market is showing as 40, but that includes days when a property is under contract before closing. Current market challenges include supply and affordability. Inventory has picked up, with 21 active listings and 10 under contract.

### **Update on Monthly Tax Revenues**

City Manager Conrad reported on tax revenues collected in October and received in December. All taxes were flat across the board with the exception of the Use Tax, which was down about \$2,000 for both the month and the year. Taxes collected in December as follows:

- Business District Tax: \$145,000
- Sales Tax: \$301,000
- Non-Home Rule Sales tax: \$166,000
- Income Tax: \$91,000
- Use Tax: \$33,000
- Marijuana Tax: \$1,222
- Telecom Tax (Excise Tax): \$9,471
- Gaming: \$60,076

City Manager gave an update on a recent movement of businesses and large corporations challenging their property tax assessments and receiving significant reductions and the adverse effect that has on the remainder of the taxpayers, including residential taxpayers. Conrad has reached out to Fred Michael who is on the County Board to discuss this problem and what can be done to stop it. Some of these reductions have been overturned at the state level on appeal.

There was a brief discussion on the impact of the disabled veteran property tax exemption.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Industrial Development Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, February 7, 2024.

### **Adjournment**

Jon Greve made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Marshall Rinderer. All members voted aye; none voted no. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 12:49 PM.