

**MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2017**

Mayor Michaelis called the Regular Session to order at 7:00pm. Council members Schwarz, Frey, Bellm and Nicolaides were present. Others in attendance were City Manager Mark Latham, City Attorney John Long; Directors Gillespie, Korte, Rosen and Schoeck; EMS Chief Wilson, Lt. Conrad, Deputy City Clerk Hediger, City Clerk Bellm; Steve Keil, P.E., of Oates Associates, 1 citizens and one member of the news media.

MINUTES

Councilman Schwarz made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2016 Regular Session as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Schwarz, Frey, Bellm and Nicolaides voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

PUBLIC FORUM

Citizens' Requests and Comments:

No requests or comments presented.

Requests of Council:

No requests or comments presented.

Staff Reports:

Nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Bill #17-01/RESOLUTION Authorizing City Attorney to File Necessary Paperwork with the State of Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #17-01/Resolution #17-01-2429 authorizing City Attorney to file necessary paperwork with the State of Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board as attached; seconded by Councilman Schwarz. City Attorney John Long reported an appeal was filed the end of 2014. When you go to the property appeal board, the taxing body may intervene. In order to intervene in the appellate process, we need to state our intention to do so. City Manager Latham pointed out that when the hospital built, we issued bonds to cover the cost of the development of the area. When the taxes were assessed on the medical center, the group filed an appeal. With them trying to lower the assessed valuation, we get a smaller return on taxes. That property tax revenue is what is to be used to pay the bond off. Roll Call Vote: Schwarz, Frey, Bellm, and Nicolaides voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Approve Professional Engineering Services Agreement with Oates Associates, Inc. to Evaluate Recently Released Draft of FEMA Flood Information Rate Maps and to Develop Options for Reducing Flood Impacts on Lindenthal Creek and Laurel Branch – Councilman Schwarz made a motion to approve Professional Engineering Services Agreement with Oates Associates, Inc. to evaluate recently released draft of FEMA Flood Information Rate Maps and to develop options for reducing flood impacts on Lindenthal Creek and Laurel Branch as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Councilman Schwarz noted these maps impacts property values and their insurance rates going up. We are trying to protect our citizens and property owners with the cost of insurance, while protecting our interest in keeping the assessed evaluations up. City Manager Latham explained the FEMA maps were not developed by them shooting elevations. They are looking at aerial views and making determinations based upon. Now we have the hospital property and high school in the maps. Since 1986, there has been a lot of development in the areas that the FEMA floodplain maps now include. Councilman Schwarz asked are these property owners pursuing their own protests. City Manager Latham stated I spoke with property owner on Third Street, where he has lived for 60 years. He is now looking at a \$1600 increase in his homeowners' insurance. The culvert under the railroad tracks is not in the best shape. This study would also look at making improvements to that, which would assist in acting as a safeguard to any flooding situations. Councilman Schwarz asked are other cities doing the same or are they treating this as a private issue. City Manager Latham acknowledged most are treating this as a private issue; however, they are not impacted to the extent that these proposed maps would affect the community as a whole. Councilwoman Bellm stated the maps FEMA presented before were scary. Councilman Schwarz asked how persuadable is FEMA. City Manager Latham acknowledged FEMA is a federal agency. They cannot do whatever they want to do. Congressman John Shimkus stated he would assist in whatever means he has. I am concerned about the commercial property impacted, but I am also concerned about the eighty-year old man that is retired and has to find additional funds for insurance. Attorney Long stated there has been cities all over the country trying to fight this. This study is to help in building that case against FEMA. Councilman Schwarz asked do not want to spend the money on something that is not going to give us anything. Attorney Long advised if you are going to have a chance at winning at all, you have to have engineering data. Councilwoman Bellm added my understanding is that it is best to have the case built before the maps are finalized. Attorney Long concurred, if you do it before the maps are finalized, you can change it in an administrative appeals process. After they are finalized, you must file suit in court. Mayor Michaelis stated I think it our responsibility to support the property owners of this community. In our situation, it is a city issue than a private ownership matter.

City Manager Latham asked Steve Keil, of Oates Associates, if he had any additional comments. Mr. Keil stated we are look condition of existing culvert under the railroad, with this study, as we know it is undersized. At the time it was put in, it was adequate; however, with all the development, that may not be the case. We are going review FEMA data. We are going to look at options to mitigate or provide for recourse with calculations on prior maps and development that occurred based upon them. With that, we would look at options for the culvert to assist with the flow of any floodwaters. At the same time, we want to make sure that do not create another problem downstream. Roll Call Vote: Schwarz, Frey, Bellm, and Nicolaides voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Award Bid #E-08-16 for Purchase of Lighting for Sportsman Road – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to award Bid #E-08-16 for purchase of lighting for Sportsman Road to Graybar Electric, in the amount of \$31,787.50 as attached; seconded by Councilman Schwarz. Roll Call Vote: Schwarz, Frey, Bellm, and Nicolaides voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Approve Warrant #1045 – Councilman Schwarz made a motion to approve Warrant #1045 as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Schwarz, Frey, Bellm and Nicolaides voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to temporarily adjourn this regular session to enter into executive session under the Illinois Open Meetings Act under Section 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) to discuss the performance and compensation of a specific employee; seconded by Councilman Schwarz. Roll Call Vote: Schwarz, Frey, Bellm, and Nicolaides voted aye, none nay. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:29pm.

Mayor Michaelis reconvened the Regular Session at 7:55pm. Roll Call Vote: Councilman Nicolaides, Bellm, Frey and Schwarz were present, along with City Manager Latham, City Attorney Long, Deputy City Clerk Hediger and City Clerk Bellm.

Mayor Michaelis stated nothing discussed in Executive Session this evening would be acted upon in this session.

Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilman Schwarz. All council members voted aye, none nay. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

Joseph Michaelis, Mayor

Barbara Bellm, City Clerk