

**MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION  
HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**

Mayor Hemann called the Regular Session to order at 7:00pm. Council members Frey, Bellm, and Hipskind were present. Councilwoman Sloan absent. Others in attendance were Acting City Manager Vazquez, City Attorney Michael McGinley, Directors Cook, Gillespie, and Korte, Police Chief Becherer, Coordinator Hubbard, Treasurer Nicolaides, Deputy City Clerk Hediger, City Clerk Bellm, and 25 citizens.

**MINUTES**

Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2021 Regular Session as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Citizens' Requests and Comments:

*Highland Middle School Band – Band Concert on Square –Special Event Application –* Berta Perez, Band Parents Association President, requested use of the Square on October 12, 2021 for school band concert. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the request of the Highland Middle School Band to hold a band concert on October 12, 2021, as requested; seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

*Moose Lodge – Moose Chili Cook - Off – Special Event Application –* Mike Elliot, Representative, stated the Mood Lodge is planning to hold their annual chili cook off at the main pavilion at Lindendale Park, on October 17, along with a car show. Councilwoman Bellm asked Chief Becherer if he had looked at the application; and, is it all good to go. Chief Becherer replied yes. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to grant the request of the Moose Lodge to hold their annual Chili Cook-Off at the Lindendale Park Main Pavilion on October 17, 2021, from 8:00am – 5:00pm as attached; seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

*Lion's Club – Highland Merry Mile – Special Event Application –* Ryan Goodwin and Denny Foehner, Representatives, requested permission to host a run from the Lindenthal Campus to the middle of Main Street on Friday, November 26, 2021, just preceding the holiday parade. Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the Lion's Club request to hold the Highland Merry Mile, on Friday, November 26, 2021, from 6:00pm-6:30pm as requested; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

*Highland High School – Request to use the Square for Homecoming on October 9, 2021 –* Danielle Case, representative, requested permission for the high school to host their homecoming the Square on Saturday, October 9, beginning at 7pm. We would ask that the streets around the Square be closed during the event. Clean up will be immediately after it ends. Acting City Manager Breann Vazquez noted that in the event of incimate weather it was discussed that we would blocking off Washington and Laurel Streets for setup. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Highland

High School's request to use the Square on October 9, 2021 for the Homecoming as requested; seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Mayor Hemann stated if anyone wishes to speak on anything else or regarding any of the items on the agenda, now is the time to come forward.

Mary Ottis stated she live in Cambridge Meadows. She wanted to thank Joe Gillespie and Clint Conrad for meeting with her to explain how they schedule projects. She suggested they look to long-term projects and planning versus doing just short-term projects. Talking about the pool, which was discussed last time: It is fundraising season and I had kids that are in 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grades at more door. So, I took the opportunity to pole them on the options. They all wanted the pool to be where it is at now. While they have outgrown it, they have younger siblings and family members. They, themselves, enjoyed riding their bikes or walking to the pool. In looking at the funding for this, Mrs. Ottis suggested a couple of things that could be done, or done in combination. There is the Salvation Army and the United Way that do fundraisers and you could utilize those organizations. It could also be done in combination with another idea. I talked to several of my friends about how many multi-millionaires we have in this town. We believe there is six to twelve. If they each chip in on it, they could have their names on it. If it is built, it should be part of a referendum vote as to the location. To just take it away would leave us without anything. We don't want to be noted as the south side of town.

Mrs. Ottis stated she would also like to talk about the communications department. We got the letter that services were changing. I had no problem with the additional charges. Now they are making changes to our services and taking channels away. Why was this not communicated before? I am not upset. I like the service. You cannot make a decision as a committee without taking into consideration those that use the services and the citizens. Mayor Hemann acknowledge the technology is very complicated. So, I can understand your frustration. Mrs. Ottis stated the change to Victory TV and what was all involved should have been sent to us ahead of time. Councilwoman Bellm stated met with Mrs. Ottis on this and has sent all of her comments to City Manager Conrad. Mrs. Ottis stated I spoke to a lot of my friends that are seniors and they were not aware of all of these changes. Things need to be better communicated to us.

Karen Mason, 1404 Zschokke Street, stated I am here regarding the short-term rental use proposed on Zschokke Street. The location of the off-street parking causes concern. The neighbors treat the alley as an extension of our yards with how the kids play and our pets. Strange cars would not know this and look out for kids and pets. The parking in the alley is terrible. I checked short-term rentals in the area. There are no listings with street and alley parking in the 100-mile radius. The short-term rental that exists has off-street, which is immediately off the street – not in in the middle of the block. The street parking is interrupted by 14<sup>th</sup> Street. In his packet, he shows parking on both sides of 14<sup>th</sup> Street. That is a misrepresentation, as there is only one-sided parking on 14<sup>th</sup> Street. All the security means he has does not do anything for our neighborhood properties. The checks done on the tenants could allow for a pedophile. The other short-term rental example used does not use electronic security means. The owners are right there. He says the price is \$179 per night on one page; on another page, it shows \$173 for a two-night stay; so, he is misrepresenting himself in the packet again. Adding the upstairs to this only doubles the amount of transients each night. The city really needs to look at this. A true B&B is better than the homes we live in. They are owner occupied. This is no more than a motel room that you can fit a lot of people into. Mrs. Mason stated there are several people here that are opposed to this short-term rental. Would you like to hear from each of them or is a show of hands sufficient? Mayor Hemann stated a show of hands is fine; however, anyone is welcome to speak. City Attorney McGinley suggested if anyone has anything else to add, please come forward.

Sarah Knobloch and seven-year old Julia Knobloch, of 1403 Pine Street came forward. Sarah stated we are really concerned about this. Julia understand that if this goes through, we will not be allowed to play at her friend's house, which is next door to that house. With a revolving door at the house next door, I will not feel comfortable. The alley is a place the kids use to go from house to house. If you are not familiar with this alley and the residents, it makes it dangerous.

David Mason, 1404 Zschokke St., stated it is my understanding Planning & Zoning has denied this twice, and council has denied it once. I am not sure how often you can beat a dead horse before it is dead.

Russ Lentz, 1114 13<sup>th</sup> Street, stated my plea is a little more emotional. Miles claims to have a genuine concern for the neighbors. He had disproved that by his keep trying to come up here and get this passed when us neighbors have told him we do not want this. So to say he cares about us is a misrepresentation.

Chris, 1320 Pine Street, stated we have only lived here a year and half. We keep hearing the joke that we are outsider because we are not from here. This is only my seventh time moving. This is the most special place, yet, because the people really care about each other. Just like everyone else, this issue concerns us. When pulling out of the alley I know to be careful of the kids. If you are not from there, you do not know to look for them. There are a lot of kids in this area. Mayor Hemann stated thank you for your comments and your service to our country.

Randy Dicken, 1123 Lindenthal Ave., stated we live at the corner of Lindenthal and Zschokke Street. I have moved nine times in my life. My neighbors look at for one another. When my boys were still living at home and a concerned neighbor pointed it out that there was a sex offender living in the area. I have residential buildings around the county. Cameras prevent next to nothing. Mile's one purpose is to gain properties and line his pockets. I know the owner of the Airbnb at 6<sup>th</sup> & Cypress Street. It is a beautiful place and that is how he runs his property.

Jerome Blackie Kuhl stated you have heard the whole thing tonight. I came to see about the accident. We are a one percent. You have more rubbish around town than should have. Need to clean it up. There are weeds growing around the parks and Four Diamonds area. Just like here, tonight, people want to be able to talk to you about what is going on.

Acting City Manager Breann Vazquez read comments into the record for what was received regarding 1320 Zschokke. The subject is '1320 Zschokke Street'. The email reads, 'I am writing with my concerns for this property becoming a short-term rental. I live very close to it at 1204 14th St. I am a single, retired grandmother and I don't like the idea of strangers coming and going constantly so close to me. Plus, there are a lot of very young kids living close by that property, which concerns me with strangers coming and going. There is also the fact that there isn't good parking and it will require people to use the alley, or the street to park. Which will make it congested and unsafe. This is a peaceful, comfortable, single family, neighborhood and I think it would be a very bad idea to approve this special use permit. Debra Toenyes'

#### Requests & Comments of Council:

Mayor Hemann thanked staff and council members that were able to attend the Mayor's Conference, last Thursday, at the Old Wicks Factory. He also thanked the Highland Jaycees for putting on the Schweizerfest. They had a lot of obstacles to overcome to make the event happen this year.

### Staff Reports:

Acting City Manager Breann Vazquez read a memo from Fire/EMS Chief Brian Wilson regarding the two Highland Firemen, one Marion Fireman, and one Marine Fireman, along with one pump truck that were deployed to Louisiana for hurricane recovery relief efforts:

‘Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Illinois Fire Service established itself as having the organizational structure, apparatus and personnel to rapidly respond to Louisiana in times of natural disasters, such as devastating hurricanes. Since 2005, this deployment marks the third time that Illinois has responded to Louisiana following major hurricanes.

In 2005, Illinois responded with 600 firefighters and 200 fire apparatus, following Katrina and during Rita. In 2008, Illinois once again responded with several hundred firefighters and apparatus following Hurricane Gustav and during Ike. In 2012, Illinois sent firefighters, and ambulances to the east coast following Hurricane Sandy.

Immediately following Ida, Illinois was asked to send their Urban Search and Rescue Team with boats, for emergency rescue work. This team mobilized within 12 hours of the request and convoyed to Louisiana. This team was tasked with search and rescue of stranded residents. They assisted in several hundred rescues over the first week. This team has since returned to Illinois.

Late last week, Louisiana requested three fire engine strikes teams from Illinois to assist their local units on a sustained basis of at least two additional weeks. Each strike team consists of five pumper trucks, each with an Officer, an operator and two firefighters. Each strike team also has a chief officer with an aide. Doing the math, this deployment comes to fifteen pumper trucks, 60 pumper crew members, 3 chiefs and 3 aides in 3 Command Staff vehicles.

Costs incurred by agencies sending personnel on these deployments are reimbursed by FEMA. Personnel, apparatus and consumables will be paid for, although that may a number of months to realize.

The value of these deployments to the personnel who respond is great. The wide array of lessons learned regarding what to expect from and how to handle natural disasters cannot be learned from a book or in a classroom. The return on the investment is significant for each agency who sends personnel on these deployments. The bigger benefit will come when Illinois finds itself needing assistance from first responder from outside of Illinois. Those that we have helped over the years have committed to helping us when we need it.

Our current deployment group departed this morning. They anticipate arriving in their base camp in the early morning hours of September 8. Their mission at this time is to assist with day-to-day fire suppression efforts. They will be assigned to various fire stations, working a 48-hour shift followed by 48 hours off. Deployments are typically fourteen-day periods of time, plus one travel day on each end.

We will receive regular updates as to the progress of these teams. If the need for assistance will continue beyond 14 days, and additional request for resources will again be sent across Illinois. Following Katrina, Illinois resources were present for 6 weeks post storm, with three rotations of 14 days each. The current response group will return in 14 days, no matter what.’

Light & Power Director Dan Cook provided an update on the replacement Christmas lightening. He stated this request has got accelerated with the school’s request to hold homecoming at the Square. They have asked us to put up the tree wraps to add some decoration to the Square for their event. Director Cook reported the grand total is for replacement is about \$13,000. I have some wiggle room in my budget, because of delivery time and escalated prices, we are holding off on replacement of a bucket

truck. Normally, we would buy several hundred to a thousand lights each year, for replacements. These LED lights will be much more resilient and would be more in line with the snowflake light pole decorations. Mayor Hemann asked when we them put up for the high school homecoming we would leave them up for Christmas. Director Cook replied, yes, we would leave the wraps up, but pull the extension cords until closer the holidays.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Bill #21-143/ORDINANCE Defining Meeting, and Adopting Procedures for Electronic Attendance at Meetings, Procedures for Email Public Comment at Meetings, and Procedures for Telephonic Monitoring of Meetings – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #21-143/ Ordinance #3126 defining meeting, and adopting procedures for electronic attendance at meetings, procedures for email public comment at meetings, and procedures for telephonic monitoring of meetings as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #21-144/RESOLUTION Authorizing Allocation of Hotel/Motel Tax Funding for Advertisement of the 2021 Street Art Festival – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #21-144/Resolution #21-09-2870 authorizing allocation of hotel/motel tax funding for advertisement of the 2021 Street Art Festival as attached; seconded by Councilman Frey. Councilwoman Bellm asked are we okay financially to do this. Finance Director Kelly Korte replied yes. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #21-145/ORDINANCE Amending Chapter 22 of the Code Concerning Fees and Assessments for the City Cemetery – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #21-145/ Ordinance #3127 amending Chapter 22 of the Code concerning fees and assessments for the City Cemetery as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Councilwoman Bellm pointed out it seems these fees have not been increased since 2015. Mayor Hemann responded I think that is correct. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #21-146/ORDINANCE Establishing Service Charges to be Collected and Paid to the City for Refuse Collection Service – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #21-146/Ordinance #3128 establishing service charges to be collected and paid to the City for refuse collection service as attached; seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #21-147/RESOLUTION Authorizing the City to Enter into Vendor Agreement for the Low-Income Households Water and Wastewater Assistance Program with Madison County Community Development – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #21-147/Resolution #21-09-2871 authorizing the city to enter into vendor agreement for the low-income households water and wastewater assistance program with Madison County Community Development as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #21-148/ORDINANCE Approving and Authorizing Execution of an Economic Development Agreement Pursuant to 65 ILCS 5/8-1-2.5, with SBFG, LLC, and Other Actions Related Thereto - Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #21-148/Ordinance #3129 approving and authorizing execution of an economic development agreement pursuant to 65 ILCS 5/8-1-2.5, with SBFG, LLC, and other actions related thereto as attached; seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #21-149/RESOLUTION Approving Owner Change Order Number Thirteen for the Public Safety Building – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #21-149/Resolution #21-09-2872 approving Owner Change Order Number Thirteen for the Public Safety Building as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #21-150/ORDINANCE Approving Real Estate Rezoning for 717 5<sup>th</sup> Street, From “C-2” Central Business District to “I” Industrial – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #21-150/Ordinance #3130 approving real estate rezoning for 717 5<sup>th</sup> Street, from “C-2” Central Business District to “I” Industrial as attached; seconded by Councilman Frey. Councilwoman Bellm clarified this went before Planning & Zoning and was approved. Director Vazquez replied yes. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #21-151/RESOLUTION Making Separate Statement of Findings of Fact in Connection with Ordinance Granting Special Use Permit for Miles Maggio on Behalf of Marge Donnelly to Allow for Short Term Rentals at 1320 Zschokke Street – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #21-151/Resolution #21-09-2873 making separate statement of findings of fact in connection with ordinance granting Special Use Permit for Miles Maggio on behalf of Marge Donnelly to allow for short term rentals at 1320 Zschokke Street as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Councilwoman Bellm asked Breann or City Attorney McGinley to explain what this Separate Statement of Finding is. City Attorney McGinley advised the Separate Statement of Findings of Fact is required by our code that states what happened at in this process and through Planning & Zoning. Councilwoman Bellm clarified the Findings of Fact documents what happened. Attorney McGinley stated all that happened was in support of passing the ordinance. Mayor Hemann pointed out that Planning & Zoning voted down approving the request for granting the Special Use Permit. City Attorney McGinley replied that is correct. The first time it went through the Planning & Zoning it was a different request from this one. The second application was tabled, then brought back, and was denied. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted nay, none aye. Motion failed.

Bill #21-152/ORDINANCE Granting a Special Use Permit to Miles Maggio on Behalf of Marge Donnelly to Allow for Short Term Rentals at 1320 Zschokke Street – Since Bill #21-151 failed to pass, this bill was not mute.

Award Bid #PW-06-21, for Broadway and Zschokke Street Parking Lot – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to award Bid #PW-06-21, for Broadway and Zschokke Street Parking Lot to Stutz Excavating, Inc., in the amount of \$162,290.00 as attached; seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

## **REPORT**

Accepting Expenditures Report #1202 for August 14, 2021 through September 3, 2021 – Councilman Frey made a motion to accept Expenditures Report #1201 for August 14, 2021 through September 3, 2021 as attached; seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Frey, Bellm and Hipkind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.

Kevin B. Hemann, Mayor

Barbara Bellm, City Clerk