

**MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, MAY 20, 2024**

Mayor Hemann called the Regular Session to order at 6:30pm at the Highland Area Senior Center. Council members Sloan, Frey, Bellm, and Napper were present. Others in attendance were City Manager Conrad, City Attorney Mike McGinley, Directors Cook and Gillespie, Lt. Finney, EMS Chief Wilson, Chris Flake, Easton Rosen, Deputy City Clerk Hediger, City Clerk Bellm, and 26 citizens.

MINUTES

Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2024 Regular Session as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

PUBLIC FORUM

Citizens' Requests and Comments:

2024 Kirchenfest – Special Event Application – Katrina Hodous, 2024 General Chairman, stated they are planning Kirchenfest for August 23, 24 & 25, 2024 with a similar schedule as in the past. This year will include the run, bike race, and we are bringing back the live auction for a few hours. She asked the council for consideration for them to hold their event. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the special event application for Kirchenfest 2024 for August 23, 24 & 25, 2024 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Extension of Power in Garden at Glik Park – Nancy Hediger, Highland Garden Club, coordinator of the garden at Glik Park stated we received over \$8,000 for permanent lighting that we have been using extension cords to power. We are asking for assistance with extending permanent power for the lighting. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the request for extension of power into Glik Park. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. Councilwoman Sloan noted I am seeing the cost estimate is \$8050. She asked Light & Power Director Dan Cook, I assume this was not part of your budget. Director Cook replied no. Councilwoman Sloan asked Mrs. Hediger is there any fundraising opportunities to maybe raise at least half of this cost and the city match that. Mrs. Hediger responded we have many fundraising efforts. Most of it goes to all the gardens we tend to around town, in addition to scholarships that we give out and those commitments. Director Cook reported often we provide labor to the different departments within the city. Over \$6,000 of the estimated cost is in labor, because we would have to bore underground due to the development done already. The transformer and power system is on the south end of the park. This is getting to those other areas. Any economies we can manage we would. Mayor Hemann expressed it is not in our best interest to have city property with extension cords running throughout them. Director Cook agreed. It bothers me at Christmas time, at the Square. He explained if we fit this in between another projects as time a lots, we should be able to get this done. The garden club will have to get an electrician to install the necessary outlets. We do not do that. Councilwoman Bellm pointed out they got over \$8000 in lighting. We should do something. Councilman Frey stated I am in favor of getting this done, but we do not want to set a precedence. Director Cook stated this if four guys

for two whole days; however, if we can get two guys on it here and there, we should be able to be done in the next few weeks. Paying businesses need to first priority. Councilwoman Bellm agreed us setting a precedence here. City Attorney Mike McGinley advised, I would say you are not setting precedence, because we have a volunteer organization maintaining property within a city park. City Manager Conrad added the garden club has not come to us in a long time for assistance on anything. Director Cook emphasized we will do our best to limit the labor cost. There will still be expense for the Garden Club. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Mayor Hemann noted he recently had a lady, who lives in Naples, Florida, that came into the Highland Community Foundation. She was visiting Highland, visited the park, and she wants to put a \$2500 sculpture out in Glik Park because she saw the beauty in the park.

Requests of Council:

Councilman Napper stated he had a question with EMS being cut back to one truck, due to call volume being reduced. How do we guarantee that we will have a paramedic on duty at all times? City Manager Conrad responded we have an update coming up in Staff Reports, where we can address that.

Staff Reports:

City Manager Conrad reported that, over weekend, we received a report from fisherman of sheening on north end of the lake. We deployed oil boom across the lake. We contacted Marathon that operates the lines under lake. It was found to be an organic matter or source. There are several natural bacterial things this time of the year; one specifically is iron oxide, which occurs, in iron-rich wet soil. There was nothing observed in the lake. We left the boom in for over 24 hours and there was nothing on the boom when it was pulled out. We are happy that residents are watching for those things in the lake.

City Manager Conrad provided an update on ordinance violations. We have 29 total active cases with seven liens on various properties, and three more nuisance violations. Mayor Hemann asked what a lien is. City Manager Conrad explained when have to go on to a property to mitigate a concern, we are able to file a lien to recover the costs. We start the process with sending a notice, which gives property owners seven days to mitigate, otherwise we can go in and file a lien. Councilman Napper asked do we recover our costs of filing. City Manager Conrad replied yes.

City Manager Conrad reminded everyone about the Memorial Day Parade. Lineup is at 12:30pm on St. Paul's parking lot. Parade starts at 1:00pm and ends at VFW with a ceremony to follow.

Public Works Director Joe Gillespie provided a follow-up on the lead service line notifications that were sent out. He reported at the last meeting I handed out a copy of the notice that was going out. We also used the website and the app for notification. The notices were mailed out on May 13. We are scheduling appointments on Fridays, in fifteen-minute increments. We go in, see the service line material, and leave. We visited eighteen residences this past Friday. The next two Fridays, we have twenty-five scheduled. Councilwoman Sloan asked do you need access into the house. Director Gillespie replied yes we need access to wherever the water service comes into the house. Mayor Hemann asked how long we have to get this done. Director Gillespie replied we have until 2027 to complete the inventory. Mayor Hemann asked whose responsibility is it to replace the line, if found to be lead. Director Gillespie responded that answer is very fluid. It depends upon how many lead service lines we have in our inventory. Mayor Hemann noted the way the notification reads it is the city's responsibility. City Manager Conrad stated the statue requires us as the provider to do the inventory. Before they can get a federal budget together for any type of grants, they need to know what communities are looking at. Director Gillespie noted that anything built after 1989 would not have lead in it, so that were able to reduce our scope significantly.

EMS Chief Brian Wilson provided an update on EMS Services. He reported we have had a significant change since May 1, which has created ripple effects. IDPH provides the rules for EMS. If running an Advance Life Support (ALS) it is required to have one paramedic and one basic. We do not plan to schedule two basics at one time. Up until May 1, we were approved for operating three ALS units. The races and football games only require an ambulance, which can be served by two basics. So, we do have some flexibility. We are now approved for one basic non-transport, one basic life support unit, and two ALS units. Tonight, you are going to look at an agreement with RuralMed for backup support. Based on our historical. We have had 67 calls, which equates to 3.5 calls per day. That is just as we expected. Mondays have the least calls, with Thursdays being the busiest. We have had the fire department staff assist with lifts. On three occasions, we did have to call Troy in for assistance. Councilman Napper asked what happens if someone calls off sick. Chief Wilson responded we do a call around. Also, if one or two coming off shift, we can be mandated to stay over. The fact is we could staff for ten ambulances and need twelve at any given time. Councilman Napper stated I have been to several meetings with the fire departments; I think it will work. My concern if someone has a heart attack or a car accident at the same time. Chief Wilson responded we have contingency plans, but we can only do what we can. Councilman Frey asked where RuralMed is housing their unit. Chief Wilson replied at HPFD Station on Iberg Road.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve Mayor's Reappointment of Steven Aebischer to the Liquor Control Commission – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the mayor's reappointment of Steven Aebischer to the Liquor Control Commission, for another three-year term, to expire June 2027 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Approve Mayor's Reappointment of Lee Rinderer to the Police and Fire Commission – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the re-appointment of Lee Rinderer to the Police and Fire Commission for another three-year term, to expire June 2027 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Award Bid #E-03-24, for the Purchase of 3 Phase Pad-Mount Transformers – Councilman Frey made a motion to award Bid #E-03-24, for the purchase of 3-Phase Pad-Mount Transformers to WESCO in the amount of \$220,008.00 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. Director Cook reported we are not purchasing the cheapest ones; however, the lead on those is two years. One is specifically for St. Paul's Church for the school. This company has reliable transformers and good delivery times. We lost a transformer yesterday when two poles went down. Therefore, I feel it is important to know that we have a transformer when we need them. It is not only storms that take them out. We did have one company quoted cheaper, but it was an unknown source. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #24-62/RESOLUTION Authorizing The Sole Source Purchase of Seven Filter Flow Transmitters From R.E. Pedrotti, Inc. for \$38,316.00, and Waiving Customary Bidding Procedures – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #24-62/Resolution #24-05-3110 authorizing the sole source purchase of seven filter flow transmitters from R.E. Pedrotti, Inc. for \$38,316.00, and waiving customary bidding procedures as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Director Gillespie reported the water treatment plant supervisor did solicit some costs. We sent to a total of five companies. We received quotes labor only from one; one, equipment only; two, no quotes; and this one was the only one offering turnkey service. Our staff maybe could do the work; however, the downtime would be

considerably longer. Mayor Hemann asked if this is in your budget. Director Gillespie replied yes. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #24-63/RESOLUTION Approving and Authorizing The City of Highland's Approval Of Agreement With The Madison County Agency For Community Transit For Community Action Grant Funding In The Amount of \$13,500.00 to Reseal The Shared Use Paths From U.S. Hwy. 40 to State Route 143 – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #24-63/Resolution #24-05-3111 approving and authorizing the City of Highland's approval of agreement with The Madison County Agency For Community Transit for Community Action Grant Funding in the amount of \$13,500.00 to reseal the shared use paths from U.S. Hwy. 40 to State Route 143 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #24-64/ORDINANCE Authorizing the Execution of a New Power Sales Contract and a New Capacity Purchase Agreement With The Illinois Municipal Electric Agency for the Delivery Period Commencing October 1, 2035 – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #24-64/Ordinance #3338 authorizing the execution of a new Power Sales Contract and a new Capacity Purchase Agreement with the Illinois Municipal Electric Agency for the delivery period commencing October 1, 2035 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Councilwoman Bellm expressed thank you to those that have made us aware of your concerns. Your voices have been heard. I view this as a business concern. If asking a company to make some plans to do some new projects to work towards new renewable energy sources developed, they need to now they are going to have the customer base. I am listening to my gut and feel comfortable that staying with the IMEA is best decision. I do not feel that six months or six years is not going to change anything. I want to know that in twenty years, when I flip the light switch, the power comes on. Mayor Hemann stated we all wish we had a crystal ball to know what the future holds. We have had a good relationship with IMEA and we have a voice at the table. I do feel it is important to continue to follow-up on their commitments to renewable energy. It is a difficult decision. I was a member of the Highland Manufactures Association, forty years ago, and there were concerned about going to the IMEA. I was on the council when IMEA tried to put in a 138kV line from Aviston. I was at a mayor's conference, last week, and spoke with about twenty other mayors. I can say all within our area are planning to sign with IMEA. I hope it is not tying us into coal until 2050. Councilman Frey expressed IMEA has had a good track record. When I looked around for alternatives, I do not know how we could go out and do those negotiations. I think some day we will be out of the coal source industry. For now, we do not have an option. Wind and solar is not going to keep up with pace of coal and the demand that is out there. Unfortunately, I foresee a potential for rolling blackouts in Highland. Councilman Napper stated if something is working, we need to stay with it. IMEA is working for us. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #24-65/RESOLUTION Approving Stipulation Between City of Highland and Highland Medical Building Partners, LLC for the Valuation of Property located At 208 Flax Drive – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #24-65/Resolution #24-05-3112 approving stipulation between City of Highland and Highland Medical Building Partners, LLC for the valuation of property located at 208 Flax Drive as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. City Manager Conrad reported we partnered with the school district, as we have seen tax assessment legal firms that come in and file property tax challenges. The amounts have been very substantial and preserve as much as we can for the taxing bodies. When a property owner has their EAV lowered, it spreads the burden to the rest of the taxpayers. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #24-66/RESOLUTION Authorizing City to Enter into a Mutual Aid Agreement with RuralMed EMS NFP – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #24-66/Resolution #24-05-3113 authorizing City to enter into a mutual aid agreement with RuralMed EMS NFP as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Accepting Expenditures Report #1266 for May 4, 2024 through May 17, 2024 – Councilman Frey made a motion to accepting Expenditures Report #1266 for May 4, 2024 through May 17, 2024 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

City Manager Conrad reported he will not be in attendance at next council meeting.

Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. All aye, none nay. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

Kevin B. Hemann, Mayor

Barbara Bellm, City Clerk