

**MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2023**

Mayor Hemann called the Regular Session to order at 7:00pm at the Senior Center. Council members Sloan, Frey, Bellm, and Hipskind were present. Others in attendance were City Manager Conrad, Directors Cook, Gillespie, and Vazquez, Police Lt. Fenny, EMS Chief Wilson, Coordinator Mallord, Treasurer Nicholaides, Deputy City Clerks Hediger and VonHatten, City Clerk Bellm, 7 citizens, and 1 member of the news media.

MINUTES

Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2023 Regular Session as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

PUBLIC FORUM

Citizens' Requests and Comments:

Highland Speedway 2023 Calendar of Events – Special Event Application - Sue Zobrist, Track Manager, gave a shot out to the Highland Ambulance Service, whom they worked with last year, and it was a great experience. Mrs. Zobrist reported we are starting this season out on March 12. By having that extra hour before curfew, between Memorial Day and early August, it really helped a lot. We did not have to use it, but maybe once or twice; however, having it seemed to make things run smoother. We would like to have that again this year. Mayor Hemann stated he did not recall hearing any complaints due to it. Councilmembers did not recall receiving any complaints, as well. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the 2023 races and Madison County Fair event dates. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Highland Lions Club – Highland Biathlon – Special Event Application - Ryan Goodwin, Representative, stated we are once again hosting the Biathlon on May 27, 2023 8am - 11am. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the Highland Lion's Club request to hold their annual biathlon event on May 27, 2023 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Illinois Trekkers – A Walk in Highland – Special Event Application – Vickie Ridgeway, Representative, stated we had a wonderful walk, last year, and then the rains came in. The community stepped up and brought people in from the rain. We are looking to do it again, on Saturday, May 13, 2023. We are doing it a little different this year, and hope to have a route that goes past The Old Wick's Factory. We have two non-competitive 5K routes that start and end at the Square. Councilwoman Bellm asked how many years this has been held in Highland. Ms. Ridgeway estimated forty-two years. Councilwoman Bellm requested permission for the Illinois Trekkers to do their annual walks around Highland on Saturday, May 13, 2023, from 8:00am – approximately 3:30pm. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Sloan. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Requests of Council:

. Councilwoman Sloan commended everyone on a great job with the appreciation banquet that was put on the other week.

Staff Report:

City Manager Chris Conrad reported Street crews will be doing some patchwork in Camden Estates and the Greenbrier Subdivisions this next couple of weeks. We will be continuing our sewer improvement projects with work crews in the Lakeland Terrace area.

With regards to City Hall, the insurance company has agreed to pay for replacement of all interior walls on the east side of the building. We are finalizing drawings and hope to have it all to the council by the next meeting.

Mayor Hemann reported he sat in on the budget meetings, this past week. The amount of work the directors put preparing their budgets is tremendous. They were all well prepared. Council will be hearing about some of those difficult items, shortly.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve Mayor's Appointments of Larry R. Munie to the Combined Planning and Zoning Board – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the mayor's appointments of Larry R. Munie to the Combined Planning and Zoning Board, to fill the unexpired term of Alan Stoecklin, which will expire August 31, 2024 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #23-10/ORDINANCE Declaring Personal Property of the City Surplus and Authorizing its Sale and/or Disposal, Specifically a 2017 Ford Escape and a 2018 Ford Escape – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #23-10/Ordinance #3254 declaring personal property of the City surplus and authorizing its sale and/or disposal, specifically a 2017 Ford Escape and a 2018 Ford Escape as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #23-11/ORDINANCE Amending City Code, Chapter 25 – Nuisances, Article I – Nuisances Generally, Section 25-3. – Specific Nuisances Enumerated, (18). Noise – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #23-11/Ordinance #3255 amending City Code, Chapter 25 – Nuisances, Article I – Nuisances Generally, Section 25-3. – Specific Nuisances Enumerated, (18). Noise as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Mayor Hemann inquired is this to address some complaints at one local establishment. City Manager Conrad reported we never had any hard found issues with that establishment. When going through the code, related to that, we did find some things in the ordinance that made it difficult to enforce, should there have been an issue. This sets some hard-set decibel levels. Attorney Mike McGinley explained this sets some specific objectives to base decisions on as to whether it is a nuisance or not. That being said, our officers are well trained; in the end, it is up to their discretion to issue an ordinance violation. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #23-12/ORDINANCE Declaring Personal Property of the City Surplus and Authorizing its Sale and/or Disposal, Specifically Generators and Ancillary Components Used by the City Light and Power Department – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #23-12/Ordinance #3256 declaring personal property of the city surplus and authorizing its sale and/or disposal, specifically

generators and ancillary components used by the City Light and Power Department as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Director Cook reported we have two Fairbanks and five CAT generators that we receive capacity credits for running. These units, Generators #5 and #6, which are emergency only. They have not been used due the definition of emergency. Mayor Hemann noted the one unit has a Basler controller on it. Are they aware we are going to surplus it? Do they have any interest in it? Director Cook responded they are aware we are going to get rid of it. He explained we are going to save \$25,000-\$30,000 by not having these set online, because we have to continually run water and oils through them, and keep them somewhat temperature controlled. Mayor Hemann asked would a foreign, third-world country want them. Director Cook replied they could; however, they may get purchased out for spare parts. Councilman Hipskind asked how you market these. Director Cook explained we will utilize various auction sites that purchase and sell in these markets. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #23-13/ORDINANCE Amending Chapter 78 – Utilities, Article II – Electric Service Regulations, Division 3 – Billing and Rates, Section 78-112 – Schedule of Electric Rates, of the Code, to Adjust the Electric Rates Charged by the City of Highland Department of Light & Power – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #23-13/Ordinance #3257 amending Chapter 78 – Utilities, Article II – Electric Service Regulations, Division 3 – Billing and Rates, Section 78-112 – Schedule of Electric Rates, of the Code, to adjust the electric rates charged by the City of Highland Department of Light & Power as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Director Cook reported, seven years ago, we had our first rate increase in over twenty years prior. It was based upon a cost of services study. Two years ago, we came back, and requested an increase. Once again, we are in need of this. Ameren has raised rates considerable. There is also the push for electric vehicles, as well. Many things have caused material costs to skyrocket and labor costs have increased. Councilwoman Sloan asked how much of an increase. Director Cook estimated a 4% increase. The largest increase is the meter fee, which is going from \$9 to \$15. Mayor Hemann reported we received information that Ameren is projecting a 50% increase over the next four years. Director Cook explained for Ameren they take their costs and projected costs, and they have an accepted cost of profit. They go to the ICC with the federal initiatives and say they need the rate increases to keep their margins. They do not answer to the residents. Councilwoman Bellm expressed I would rather see a small increase regularly than a large hit. Steve Safford stated I thought the jump on the meter of \$9 to \$15 was a lot. I realize it has been a few years since there was an increase. It would have helped if smaller increases were in place versus holding off on increases. Councilwoman Bellm pointed out this belongs to the citizens. While they pay the money to the electric department, it is their system. Director Cook agreed we are non-for-profit. It is about providing a service to the residents. We do not get any bonuses or increases in pay, because of profit margins made. The costs of material have just skyrocketed, and it has becoming a bidding war on materials that are available, regardless of what costs were when an order is placed. Councilman Frey agreed we have no choice but to raise costs. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

REPORT

Accepting Expenditures Report #1235 for January 14, 2023 through February 3, 2023 – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to accept Expenditures Report #1234 for December 31, 2022 through January 13, 2023 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey.

Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Hipskind voted aye, none nay. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:31pm.

Kevin B. Hemann, Mayor

Barbara Bellm, City Clerk