

**HIGHLAND, ILLINOIS
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
CITY HALL, 1115 BROADWAY
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2026
12:00 PM**

Call to Order:

The February 4, 2026, meeting of the Industrial Development Commission was called to order at 12:04 PM by Chairman Jim Meridith. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

Roll Call:

Members present: Chairman Jim Meridith, Vice-Chairman Diane Korte-Lindsey, Marshall Rinderer and Ben Eberwein

Members absent: Kurt Vonder Haar

Also present: City Manager Chris Conrad, Mayor Kevin Hemann, Director of Economic Development Mallord Hubbard, and Recording Secretary Chris Flake

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Marshall Rinderer to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2025, Regular Session meeting of the Industrial Development Commission; It was seconded by Ben Eberwein. All members present voted aye; none voted no; the motion carried.

Reports:

Treasurer's Report – Prepared by Director of Finance Reanna Ohren – Mallord Hubbard

Mallord Hubbard reported that there was no new activity. The total cash on hand is \$25,361.71. The CD is \$25,683.75. The total assets are \$51,045.46. Mallord stated that the only upcoming expenses will be for job fair this year. IDC has supported this the past couple of years. We will bring it to the board at a further date. Mallord stated that the CD expires at the end of March. Mallord will get ahold of Reanna, who will shop around.

Conrad stated that we have a lot of reserves in the Illinois fund. It provides a daily rate and has been more lucrative than the CD's. Jim Meridith stated that he likes that idea. Conrad stated that it has outperformed the CD's the last 3 or 4 years. Conrad stated that we are holding 60-70 percent of reserves in the Illinois funds.

Updates on Developments and other City Projects – Mallord Hubbard

Mallord Hubbard stated that there is a CPZB meeting tonight. There are two items, which will be for the newest phase of the Flax development. They are requesting approval of a PUD and Preliminary Plat. There will be 20 total units and parking access. This is similar to what they already have out there. CPZB will also have a meeting in March. Mallord stated that Alphas Gym is going to have a children's party place and

work out facility. The high school is wanting to do individualized training, specifically the softball team. There will be a text amendment for gyms and health centers to be allowed in the Industrial district. Currently, we do not allow gyms in our industrial district. We don't see why we shouldn't allow gyms in the industrial district. Travis Tilton doesn't plan on completing this project until later this year.

Mallord stated that the City is in the process of doing the budget for next year. The priorities for the economic development budget is the façade program. We are going to keep it at the same level of \$75,000. We have received a good response the past several years. We are looking to continue the home incentive for the \$4,000 reimbursement to home builders. Mallord stated that the City is looking to be a legacy investor for the CEO program. We are going to be a \$3,000 sponsor for 3 years. Lastly, we are budgeting to do a new comprehensive plan beginning this fiscal year. The last time it was updated was in 2017. It is recommended to complete a comprehensive plan every 8-10 years. This will be our guiding document for the decisions that we make.

Mallord stated that we had a meeting with Aldi. Aldi is fully confident that they will receive their final permit within a month. Aldi believes they will break ground in April. They want to be open by the beginning of November.

Mallord stated that we are working with Roy Wells and Shaun Voegele for a joint parking lot. We are working on a lease agreement, for it to be paved and to allow public parking. We would like more parking near the square. We are hoping to start the parking lot projects in March.

Mallord stated that at the City council meeting on Monday, we approved the preliminary engineering on south poplar street. Conrad stated that this was a grant from IDOT. Conrad stated that the next step is to do the design work on that stretch of roadway. Conrad stated that we got the grant for the trail approximately 6 months ago. This will be concrete streets with a center turn lane and a shared use path.

Mallord stated that there has been chatter on data centers. Mallord stated that there was an email submitted for public comment at the City council meeting. Conrad addressed it at the council meeting. Conrad stated that the arguments against data centers is noise, water consumption and power consumption. Early data centers used evaporative cooling, which used a lot of water. Data centers do a closed loop system now, similar to a radiator on a car. This system addresses the noise needs now. The primary source of noise were gigantic fans. Currently, they use pumps which have little noise. A medium sized data center uses approximately 500 megawatts of power continuously. The City peaks at 36 megawatts on the hottest day of summer. This type of project is beyond anything IMEA could provide. They are looking at Troy and Granite City because the infrastructure exists there and it doesn't exist here. Conrad stated that these companies don't get incentives. These companies provide the incentives to the cities. Conrad stated that if we were to be approached by a company it would be in the industrial zone and would have to go through the special use permit process.

Mallord stated that yesterday, staff sat down with our zoning consultant. We are going to update our zoning code. It has been decades since we have updated it. We have a

working document to make some initial proposed changes. We will be reaching out to others such as builders, CPZB board members and individuals who will be affected by the code. Mallord described some of the changes to the board members. We will be cleaning up some of the definitions. We will be amending some of our tables. We have C-1 in our code, however it is not on our map. For our solar fields, we have always received a variance for them. We are looking at clarifying some of the language in this section. We want to hear from those who have to adhere to the code.

Update on Highland Communication Services – Mallord Hubbard

Mallord stated that there is nothing for HCS. Mayor Hemann stated that we are above the average of where we are supposed to be at. We have 2,700 customers and only 800 are video. HCS is operating in the positive.

Update on Workforce Development Initiatives – Mallord Hubbard

Mallord stated that there is nothing to report with Workforce Development. We are looking to have a meeting with the new owners of Basler Electric.

New Business:

Report On Monthly Tax Revenues – Chris Conrad

Chris Conrad provided the following monthly tax revenues:

Sales tax - up 18% for the month and up 12% for the year

Business District – up 6% for the month and up 4.5% for the year

Non-Home Rule – up 17% for the month and up 13% for the year

Income Tax – up 4.1% for the month and up 4.5% for the year

Use Tax – Down but is reflective in the sales tax

Pot – Down 28.7% for the month and down 4% for the year

Excise/Telecom – up 2.6% for the month and up 1% for the year

Gaming – down 11.6% for the month and up 6% for the year

Local Residential Market Update Report – Diane Korte-Lindsey

Diane Korte Lindsey provided a local residential market update.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Industrial Development Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, 2026.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. All members voted aye. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 12:54p.m.