

**MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, AUGUST 5, 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 Kathryn Warren, Directors Cook, Gillespie, and Ohren, Coordinator Hubbard, Patrolman Flake, Easton Rosen, Treasurer Nicolaides, Deputy City Clerk Hediger, City Clerk Bellm, and 3 citizens.

MINUTES

Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 15, 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:

Kurt Vonder Haar stated I am thrilled to announce the World Famous Highland Speedway is hosting the World of Outlaws Race on Tuesday, August 14, 2024. This event is attracting visitors from all over the United States and the world. We have camping reservations for people from Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, and New Zealand, so far. This event is an opportunity to showcase Highland, the hotel, shops, restaurants, as well as other businesses. It is our hope that this event brings us all together and increases our community spirit. We hope this brings everyone together. We look forward to seeing everyone out there. Things will kick off with a Fan Zone at 2pm. We will have a beerstand open and 97.5FM will be doing a live feed. There will be a poster-making station that the kids can then have autographed by the drivers, in addition to the t-shirt trailer row. A lot of different interactive things will be there for the fans. Councilwoman Sloan asked if tickets are still available. Mr. Vonder Harr replied yes. Councilwoman Sloan noted she has not seen many things on social media, unless people are following your page. She suggested posting it on the community page. Mr. Vonder Harr stated we have a lot of followers on our Facebook; however, we have not put it on the community page, because we usually do not get good feedback there. We have met with Chief Presson and are coordinating how to handle traffic with school letting out while traffic is coming in for the event, at the same time. Our plan is to be done with racing by 9:30pm-10:00pm.

John Kapp reported on the Madison County Fair. It was a lovely week. It was amazing how many people were coming up to me to ask where the KC Chicken Stand was. I got a lot of aluminum cans collected from the event.

Requests of Council:

No comments or requests.

Staff Reports:

Traffic Grant Update – City Manager Chris Conrad reported from a memo provided by Chief Widman memo. As discussed, the IDOT traffic grant, of \$1300, was used until funds were exhausted. The effort was to reduce crashes, due to speeding traffic. During a twenty-four hour period, twenty-one

tickets and thirty-two warnings were issued. Twenty were for speed; five, other traffic violations; one, invalid license; and, one for improper use of electronic device. All were in 30-35mph zones.

City Manager Conrad reported that, today, Governor Pritzker signed the bill that will eliminate the grocery tax. This will go into effect June 2026. At the next meeting, staff will brief the council on the impact and what departments will be most impacted and possible actions the council can take to mitigate that impact.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve Mayor's Appointment of Michael Lawson to the Liquor Control Commission – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the mayor's appointment of Michael Lawson to the Liquor Control Commission for a term to expire June 2026 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Approve Mayor's Appointment of Mindy Stoff to the Tree Commission – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the mayor's appointment of Mindy Stoff to the Tree Commission to fill a vacancy, for a term to expire July 2025, as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Approve Mayor's Appointment of Jill Lawson to the Tree Commission – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the mayor's appointment of Jill Lawson to the Tree Commission, for a three-year term, to expire July 2027, as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Approve Transfer of Ownership of Graves in City Cemetery – Jenne to Shoulders and Sorrentino – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the transfer of ownership of Grave Spaces 1-6, in Lot No. 37, of Block No. 15, in the Highland City Cemetery, from Maureen Jenne to Michael J. Shoulders and Robin M. Sorrentino as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #24-80/RESOLUTION Approving Change Order Number One, Final and Balancing, for Street Resurfacing, PW 02-24, an Increase in Cost of \$24,717.21 – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #24-80/Resolution #24-08-3121 approving Change Order Number One, Final and Balancing, for Street Resurfacing, PW 02-24, an increase in cost of \$24,717.21 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #24-81/ORDINANCE Amending Section 78-379 of the City of Highland, Illinois, Code of Ordinances to Increase the Sewer Rates, to Support Increased Operational and Maintenance Costs of the Sewer System – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #24-81/Ordinance #3345 amending Section 78-379 of the City of Highland, Illinois, Code of Ordinances to increase the sewer rates, to support increased operational and maintenance costs of the sewer system as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Councilwoman Sloan asked Director Gillespie to explain the increase for the record. Public Works Director Joe Gillespie reported the last increase took effect in September 2023 and goes through September 2024. It was a 1.5% increase for three years. This increase for a family of four, using 5,000 gallons per month, will equate to \$1.37. When planning, 3% labor costs and OEM 2.5% is where we budget. We try to stay with costs of increases so that we do not get behind on maintaining the system, like we did before 2013. At that time, we had a lot of people flooding city hall with complaints of water backing up into their homes. Now, when there is an issue, almost always it is on the homeowner's side.

Councilman Napper expressed I understand the need to stay with the cost of increases; however, we have increased rates in electric and water already. I checked with other cities and some are more, some rates are less. I am concerned with watching the money and the taxpayers' money. I do not want to raise the rates. Councilman Frey stated \$1.37 on family using 5,000 gallons per month, is not substantial. City Manager Conrad reported some communities use a trigger effect ordinance, where they use the past twelve months of costs increases to factor and pass those increases along. Mayor Hemann pointed out that could result in larger percentages. City Manager Conrad agreed it could be worst. Mayor Hemann expressed I kind of like our own control and how Joe does it with budgeting it now and in the past, because we can hold back if cuts can be made in different areas of the budget. City Manager Conrad noted the mayor has sat through the budget planning process. However, a presentation on the trigger effect could be given to the council just for information. Councilman Napper noted that last year's CPI was 3%. Director Gillespie added the year before it was 9%. Councilman Napper stated I agree with the mayor; we do not want hitch our wagon to that, because it could be worst. Councilwoman Bellm expressed it would not hurt to look at it, though. Councilman Napper stated I like to look at other communities; however, they have a different setup than we do. City Manager Conrad agreed. You have to look at what it cost to run day-to-day and how old your system, which effects the differences between communities. Mayor Hemann expressed to Director Gillespie, you take a lot of time and figuring out the rates needed to maintain the budget and system. You do a great job with that. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Approve Notice of Municipal Letting, Bid #PW-08-24, Water Reclamation Facility Steel Tank Painting – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Notice of Municipal Letting, Bid #PW-08-24, Water Reclamation Facility Steel Tank Painting as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #24-82/RESOLUTION Approving An Employee Lease Agreement with GovTempsUSA for Finance Department Consultant Services - Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #24-82/Resolution #24-08-3122 approving an employee lease agreement with GovTempsUSA for finance department consultant services as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Councilwoman Sloan asked for a run down on why we are doing this. City Manager Conrad explained we have had a lot of turnover in administrative staff, in the past few years. We are getting ready to start the audit. Additionally, we have several that are out on medical leave at the same time, in addition to transiting to new software. We have found someone that has worked in a finance department before. She will work on putting some procedures into place. The hours will vary through September. We are hoping to develop a relationship, so that as we get into the new finance software we can utilize her later, if needed. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #24-83/RESOLUTION Approving Application and Awarding Certain Financial Incentives under the City of Highland Façade Improvement Program to Lee Rinderer for 919 Main Street, Highland, Illinois – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #24-83/Resolution #24-08-3123 approving application and awarding certain financial incentives under the City of Highland Façade Improvement Program to Lee Rinderer for 919 Main Street, Highland, Illinois as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Mayor Hemann expressed it is nice to see this program utilized. City Manager Conrad reported the Intern Easton Rosen can answer any questions regarding this program. Councilman Frey asked how far we are reaching out. Easton Rosen reported this is available for any of the businesses in the business district area. Councilman Frey asked have you been physically going out and talking to the businesses. Easton replied yes. Actually, Patty Jacoby just started the process. Councilwoman Bellm inquired what is the amount. Mr. Rosen reported the improvement costs must be \$10,000 minimum; then the city will reimburse 25% up to \$10,000 maximum. He added I will be back at the end of the month to do some things at the elementary school, talking to the kids about things to do in Highland and give them some

civic pride. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Accepting Expenditures Report #1271 for July 13, 2024 through August 2, 2024 – Councilman Frey made a motion to accepting Expenditures Report #1271 for July 13, 2024 through August 2, 2024 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:04pm.

Kevin B. Hemann, Mayor

Barbara Bellm, City Clerk