

**MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2025**

Mayor Kevin Hemann called the Regular Session to order at 6:30pm. Council members Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper were present. Others in attendance were City Manager Conrad, City Attorney Mike McGinley, Directors Cook, Gillespie, Imming, Ohren, Rosen, and Widman, Coordinator Hubbard, Managers Kohnemann and Wilken, Fire Chief Straub, EMS Manager Nicklin, Treasurer Nicolaides, Deputy City Clerks Flake and Hediger, City Clerk Bellm, and 4 citizens.

MINUTES

Councilman Frey made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2025 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:

Highland Music School – The Highland Diamond Drummers Concert – Special Event Application – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the Highland Music School's request for The Highland Diamond Drummers Concert on the Square on May 17, 2025 as attached. Seconded by Councilman Frey. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Requests of Council:

Councilwoman Bellm stated I think we dodged a bullet the other night with the storm. Mayor Hemann agreed. Thank you to Dan and his crew for the wonderful job they did at getting power restored quickly.

Staff Reports:

Annual Public Safety Report Presentation

Public Safety Director Carole Widman began the presentation by stating this is the preferred method of telling everyone about what is happening in public safety. Community commitment is the most important element to me. The police department has twenty-two sworn officers and two civilian personnel. Our total incidents, which includes all officer activity, including self-initiated activity, reached a record number of 17,072 incidents, in 2024, up 43%. Most are community service activities that have our officers engaging in foot patrols, getting out of cars and interacting with public, business checks, community-training programs, and other interactions. Property crashes are up, by 48%, while personal injury and hit and run accidents decreased. There is no specific demographic or area trends for these. Crimes against property is down 24% overall. Fraud is up 16.5%. Chief Widman stated we are looking at different ways to educate the public on these through meetings with seniors and putting information out on social media.

Traffic citations were up 25.12% in 2024. Part of that is because we were given grants to work on enforcement of speeding and seat belt violations. She pointed out not all stops resulted in citations. Verbal warnings were 44% higher than 2023. It really is about educating people. Domestic violence was down, slightly; domestic disturbances, assaults, and sex crimes were up. We saw a dramatic increase in DUI investigations, while drug offenses are stagnant. Many of the DUI investigations are attributed to self-initiated activity. We had an individual that pulled into gas station and was so intoxicated they fell out of the vehicle. Another incident, the driver had his foot on the brake and was stopped, passed out in the vehicle, in the roadway.

Notable investigations this past year: We had fifteen vehicles burglarized; we did have a serial rapist case; and, a large amount of criminal defacement. With the burglaries, we found other agencies in the area with similar reports and we were able to coordinate our efforts with them. In the case of the defacement of property, we were able to identify the suspect through social media and a probationary officer actually closed that case for us. We have two School Resource Officer in the local schools. Officer Biggs at the high school and middle school. Officer Clewis is at the elementary and primary. I removed the elementary and primary schools from the incident reporting, since most of what is happening as far as reports at the primary and elementary are happening in the home setting and handled as domestic matters.

Fire Chief Chris Straub thanked the council for their support. Over the last year, the fire department really has grown. For 2024, the number of fire and motor vehicle accident response calls remained the same. EMS responses increased. We had a total 375 9-1-1 calls. We are at 178 calls so far this year. We find the peak time for calls is in early morning to middle of the day, 8:00am to noon. Our training facility is about 95% complete. We will be able to do most of our training out there. It is located on some space out by the Wastewater Reclamation Facility. Illinois Fire Service has also hosted training there twice.

Stephanie Nicklin, EMS Operations Manager, gave a big “shout out” to the fire department for all their help this year. Our staff has been cut down to 8 full-time and 11 part-time crewmembers. With the change in coverage venue, as of May 1, 2024, 76% of our calls originate within Highland. Call volume dropped to 1675 calls. A lot of that has to do with us no longer doing transfers. Most calls are between 7am and 11pm. Crewmembers logged 412 hours of training, primarily online, with some classroom hours as well. Mayor Hemann asked are we still averaging 3.5 calls per day. Manager Nicklin responded we are a little higher right now; however, we anticipate it will fall as we enter the summer months. With the help of the fire department, we have been able to handle the volume.

Director Widman reported Building & Zoning/Code Enforcement consists of two employees. In 2024, they saw a 10.26% increase in overall responsibilities with Building & Zoning. That was not anticipated due to interest rates and overall building costs. There was a 33% increase in code cases. We have recently hired a part-time person at the police department that is going to help with Code Enforcement in addition to some things with PD. In the next year, we are looking at hiring an additional building inspector. Councilman Frey asked if the number of permits is up. Chris Straub reported building permits were up 1.9%. So far this year, building permits are higher than last year, both commercial and residential.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve Notice of Municipal Letting, Bid #PD-01-25, for Purchase of Administrative Police Vehicle – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Notice of Municipal Letting, Bid #PD-01-25, for

purchase of administrative police vehicle as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Approve Notice of Municipal Letting, Bid #PD-02-25, for Purchase of Police Vehicle For Investigations – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Notice of Municipal Letting, Bid #PD-02-25, for purchase of police vehicle for investigations as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #25-27/ORDINANCE Amending the City Code Chapter 42 – Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions, Article V – Offenses Against Public Peace, Section 42-103 – Reserved – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #25-27/Ordinance #3384 amending the City Code Chapter 42 – Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions, Article V – Offenses Against Public Peace, Section 42-103 – reserved as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Councilwoman Sloan asked is this updating or changing code. City Attorney Mike McGinley explained, seven years ago, we split up the liquor code with the different classifications of licenses. This should have been updated at that time. Mayor Hemann summarized so cleaning up. City Attorney McGinley responded yes. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #25-28/ORDINANCE Amending the Official Zoning Map for City of Highland for 2025 – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #25-28/Ordinance #3385 amending the official zoning map for City of Highland for 2025 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Councilwoman Bellm asked how it was amended. City Attorney McGinley explained it is a statutory requirement that each year the map is to be updated and sent off to Madison County for record. As to all the changes that have occurred in that time, I do not have that. City Manager Conrad has a very colorful map with the changes. Councilwoman Bellm summarized this the annual filing of all that has happened to it all year long. City Attorney McGinley responded yes. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #25-29/RESOLUTION Authorizing the Mayor and/or City Manager to Apply for Park Commission Funds From Madison County, Illinois – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #25-29/Resolution #25-03-3168 authorizing the mayor and/or city manager to apply for Park Commission Funds from Madison County, Illinois as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #25-30/RESOLUTION Waiving Competitive Bidding Requirement and Approving And Authorizing the Purchase of a New 2025 Ram 1500 for the Fire Department From McGinley Inc. Through Stellantis for \$46,987.00, Through the State of Illinois Joint Purchasing Program – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #25-30/Resolution #25-03-3169 waiving the competitive bidding requirement and approving and authorizing the purchase of a new 2025 Ram 1500 for the fire department from McGinley Inc., through Stellantis, for \$46,987.00, through the State of Illinois Joint Purchasing Program as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. City Manager Conrad noted this falls under one of the exception to the bid process, since Stellantis actually has their own buying program. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, and Bellm voted aye, none nay. Councilman Napper abstained. Mayor Hemann voted aye. Motion carried.

Bill #25-31/RESOLUTION Waiving Competitive Bidding Requirement and Approving And Authorizing the Execution of an Agreement with Feld Fire to Purchase 16 3M Scott Air Paks and 24 Facepieces as a Sole Source Purchase – Councilman Frey made a motion to approve Bill #25-31/Resolution #25-03-3170 waiving competitive bidding requirement and approving and authorizing the execution of an agreement with Feld Fire to purchase sixteen 3M Scott Air Paks and twenty-four

facepieces as a Sole Source Purchase 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 informed council that we have a request to re-open the Public Forum, as someone is here to make a request on behalf of St. Paul's School. It was the consensus of the council to re-open Public Forum.

Citizens' Requests and Comments (Continued):

Denise Meredith stated, this coming Sunday, March 23, 2025, St. Paul's School 6th Grade will be hosting a carry out Spaghetti Dinner. We are requesting a partial road closure of Lemon Street from 9:30am – 6:30pm. Then, on May 21, 2024, we would like full road closure of Lemon Street and Olive Street between 9th Street and Main Street, 9:00am – 2:30pm for Student Appreciation Day. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the road closures as requested. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Councilwoman Bellm asked Chief Widman if they were okay with this. Chief Widman replied yes. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

Budget Discussion - FY 2025-2026 Annual Budget

City Manager Chris Conrad stated we submit for your review the FY 2025-2026 Budget that shows an anticipated \$340,784.00 budget deficit as we will be drawing on reserves for several infrastructure projects and large equipment purchases. This is admittedly an aggressive budget. The total budget for FY 25-26 is \$57,310,625.00, which is about a 10% increase from FY 24-25. Based on recent revenue data, we have anticipated a 7% increase in revenue, which accounts for current year's revenues not dropping as much as was anticipated last year. So, you may recall we had anticipated a 4% decrease in revenues for the current fiscal year, and we have beat that estimate with revenues essentially staying flat. The FY 2025-2026 budget has been prepared using the historic metrics of 85% for O&M, 10% for capital, and 5% for replacement/reserves. We made adjustments to this budget to accommodate some needed projects and equipment purchases, with Operation & Maintenance (O&M) at 77%, Capital at 16% and reserves at 2% for this budget. This deviation is reflective of the increases in project costs and equipment purchases, which necessitated an increase in capital spending as we take on some important projects and purchases across this City with this year's budget. I do not want the council to be alarmed. These projects and purchases were anticipated, and we have set aside funds into reserves in previous years specifically to accommodate these expenses. We are still seeing growth in operating expenses exceeding our revenue growth. This is an issue we will continue to monitor, and we do not have any immediate concerns about operations in any individual departments. We are addressing these issues through management and planning, such as we are doing this year by setting aside funds in one year, only to pull funds from reserves in a later year to accomplish our goals.

A primary threat we will be watching closely throughout this budget year is the slow or stagnating growth of our unrestricted revenue sources that primarily fund our government services of police, fire, parks and streets. Our unrestricted revenues have been impacted in recent years through changes in the state budget, which has required some changes in how we operate to accommodate those changes. For some time, we have been in a strange position of seeing revenue growth in our restricted funds, which allows us to complete infrastructure projects, but seeing financial pressure in our unrestricted funds, which primarily fund operations. In the EMS service, we will be closely watching federal budget policy decisions as they pertain to Medicare and Medicaid. We have eclipsed over 80% of our call volume being to individuals covered by Medicare and Medicaid. Any cuts to those programs at the federal level would have a negative impact on the revenues of that department. We have managed these issues in the past through delayed hires, attrition and delayed purchases and capital projects. This

conservative management approach has served the City well in the past and has us in a very solid financial position to weather these economic pressures until revenues balance out.

Through the FY 2025-2026 budget, we have funded our operations through the full Fiscal Year 2024-2025 and are addressing several deferred maintenance and infrastructure needs. The new citywide software implementation is ongoing, and we will continue to evaluate our operations to keep the City on a sustainable path regarding revenue versus expenses. We continue to make changes to how we provide services to our citizens and employees, with a new employee self-service module soon to be offered to employees. We hope to begin streaming our council meetings in the next few months, which would help us over the technology issues we are experiencing tonight. After several equipment delays, we hope to allow citizens to stream our meetings. Even this new format for how we present the budget, which once approved, will be uploaded to our website for public review. We hope that both the council and the citizens find this new platform easier to read and understand.

Normally, at this point, I highlight a few of our larger projects, but this year I am going to defer to our directors for that information. The directors and their staff put in numerous hours putting together their budgets, obtaining cost estimates and engaging in long-term planning. I do not want to detract from their efforts by stealing their thunder from their accomplishments. For your consideration, we submit to you the proposed operating and capital budget for the City of Highland's fiscal year of 2025/2026. I want to thank the Directors, Department Heads, and Supervisors hard work during this budget process. Each year seems to bring new challenges and shifts in the funding sources from the state, which make the budget process a little more complex each year.

General Administration

Director of Finance Reanna Ohren gave a brief overview of the layout for the new budget format presented to the council. The new format provides a lot of detail in a more user-friendly format. There is an introductory section, budget overview, and demographics regarding the city, organizational structure diagram, and a summary of the different funds and revenue sources. Then it goes into the budget for each department. The last section is a debt service overview, which outlines all the debt obligations the city has. At the end is a glossary of terms used within the budget.

As far as the General Administration budget, we do not have a whole lot going on. Capital expenditures will primarily be the Tyler Software conversion. There are also transfers to Economic Development and the Korte Rec Center.

Miscellaneous / Library

Director Ohren reported the library they will be looking to address the twenty-two year old elevator and HVAC system. Under Miscellaneous Funds, you will see information regarding levied items; transfers to and from reserves for the various departments, IMRF, police pension, liability insurance, solid waste fund, IT, auditing; and, the various boards such as the Cemetery Board of Managers. Following that is the budget information on the long-term debt that we have.

Community Development

Economic Development

Coordinator Mallord Hubbard reported, in this last year, we saw formation of the Highland Square District, which has help to facilitate ways for the businesses around the downtown square area to work together. Our Chamber of Commerce continues to grow, not only from within the community, but businesses from the area. In the past year, we have seen the opening of Gauchos Steakhouse, Sweet Shoppe, Five Below, Korte Meat Processing's new location, and several façade improvements were completed.

Included in the proposed expenditures, on Page 146, is salary, training, deploying single-family home construction incentives, continuing the façade improvement program, promoting existing businesses and marketing for additional growth, and implementing plans to enhance parking in the Downtown Square area.

TIF 1 / TIF 2

As far as TIF 1 and TIF 2, we have the same legal expenditures and bond payments.

Business Districts

Coordinator Hubbard pointed out that Business District A includes all properties in all Business Districts A, B & C together now. Expenditures will be utilized to continue business district incentives, Weinheimer parking lot improvements, and the downtown parking project.

Public Safety Department

Police Department (Page 73)

Director Widman stated you will see the largest portion of our budget is personnel related. We have two officer salaries split 75/25 with the school district for the School Resource Officers. Technology has become huge for us with computers, radios, and body cameras. There is a countywide project, coming up, which is not in the budget, because we do not know what our cost will be at this time. We do know the cost of the radios and installment in to the cars will be our responsibility. In the proposed budget, we have two cars set for replacement that are thirteen years old. We are going to transfer one off to Building & Zoning for inspections. The other vehicle was a seized vehicle that is now costing us more that it is worth.

Building & Zoning/Code Enforcement (Page 96)

Director Widman stated we are hoping to get a full-time person in there to assist with inspections and code enforcement, since the fire department takes a lot of Chris's time. I am hoping to find someone with a construction background.

EMS (Page 89)

EMS Operations Manager Stephanie Nicklin reported that our biggest change, from last year, is salary. We have been able to cut overtime dramatically. As far as capital expenditures, we are looking to replace two stretchers with auto load stretchers (\$146,000).

Fire Department (Page 81)

Fire Chief Chris Straub reported this year's proposed budget includes (\$122,912) for replacement of the air packs for the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus. We purchased the bottles last year; this is completing the project with the air packs. The other thing is (\$60,000) for a pickup truck, for utility purposes, but also for responding to emergency calls. The only other changes we had were changes to payroll due to minimum wage requirements.

Public Works Department

Streets and Alleys (Page 161)

Public Works Director Joe Gillespie reported the budget includes funds for the building our offices occupy will need roof repair or replacement and insulation. Also, replacement of the parking lot surface at the Street and Alley Facility, replacement of one dump truck (\$170,000), and continued repairs or replacements of curbs, street pavements, and sidewalks. Director Gillespie noted that over fifteen subdivisions have concrete streets. It is hard to stay in one subdivision, without neglecting other parts of town. So, we continue to do sections of each as needed, while working to maintain other areas of town.

MFT / Non-Home Rule Sales Tax

The new primary school opened this year. With that, we are working towards reconstruction of the south end of Poplar Street, from VFW Road to 30th Street. We feel confident we will receive state funds for that project. The design approval process takes 12-18 months. We are starting the design process now, so that when we receive funding we can begin to move on it. We are waiting to receive grant funds for the extension of the Sharpshooters Trail, which will extend from north of Park Hill Drive through VFW property to south end of Poplar Street. Design of that path will be worked on in this budget year, as well. We will also continue pavement rehabilitation around town. Director Gillespie noted we will be using a different chip. With the closing of Granite City Steel, we do not have access to that slag byproduct. We will be switching to a trap rock, which is typically used in asphalt. While it is not uncommon for this use, it will be new for us.

Sewer

The budget includes (\$300,000) funding to continue Cure-In-Place Pipe (CIPP) lining of original clay pipe mains; replacement of a mini excavator and a backhoe, with cost split with Water; and replacement of our sewer line vac/jet truck (\$600,000). The current truck is 2008 model. These take time to get on order and built.

Water

Capital Projects (Page 192-193) include updating controllers inside the plant, (\$250,000) filter liner and media changes to IEPA and EPA requirements and, repair of siding/painting on Main Plant Building. Under Distribution, plan to do replacement of 2-2.5" mains from 8th Street to 8th Street. We continue to work on getting inventory of all lead pipes. To date, I am happy to report, we have not found any lead services.

Electric

Fiber to the Premises (Page 212)

Technology & Innovation Director Angela Imming reported, in March 2017, HCS had 920 customers. Today, we have 2417 customers. Only 862 video customers and 200+ voice customers. We do have an edge over Spectrum at 61-62%. Last year was our biggest budget year. We are projecting that down, as new technology drops. We project data rate expenditures will go down, while the cost of video content will continue to rise. Overall revenue is down, but we are transferring less from Electric. We have servers that need to be replaced. We will be spending many late nights to get it done, but our hope is to do the upgrades with as little disruptions as possible. The roof on the building will need to be replaced as well. Director Imming warned any gains we get will be from within our system, as we do not have any new service area. Our hope is to implement a customer self-service platform this year. This will allow customers to go in and make their own content changes. We have the technology, but need to build the front of the website, yet. We have seen our install costs drop, as customers moved around; the setup is just a switch over of customer billing.

IT

Director Imming stated we really want to pay attention to technology in each department. To have a handle on that, we wanted it to have its own section in the budget. If we have a good overview, it allows us to go out and purchase in volume. Changes Microsoft is making to Microsoft Office Software licensing requirements are reflective in this budget. Also, firewalls need to be upgraded as cybercrime continues to be prevalent. Multifactor Authentication (MFA) needs to be deployed with the implementation of Tyler Software and the ability staff has to utilize it from just about anywhere.

We really have tried to promote the “We Hear You” on the Highland Happenings app, which allows requests to be sent. Councilwoman Sloan stated she has used it several times. Director Imming reported we have only received 76 requests through it in the almost six months. The budget for Tyler Software expenditures is down from last year, in the proposed budget, as the conversion is almost complete.

Electric (Page 195)

Director Dan Cook reported the proposed budget reflects expenses up 7.5% (\$2.5M). Our costs from Ameren are up about \$500,000. We will see some expenses start with Sursee station, which is the new switching station, as we begin design, engineering, and procurement. The budget reflects revenues up 9.5% (\$1.5M), reflective of the recently approved rate increases, as well as increased capacity credits from IMEA for keeping our generators ready. IMEA sees value in those generators due the vulnerability of the grid. Other things will be replacement of my truck, which will be handed down to production. Replacement of the power plant (main building) roof, at an estimated cost of \$270,000; installation of a fence and security gate for the equipment storage area by the railroad tracks (\$7,000); replacement of the compressor used to startup the generators (\$15,000); start rotation of oil changes on the generators; and, replacing doors on the building. We are going to continue to deploy more trip inceptors (\$24,000); replace our 2004 Ford Ranger locator truck, at 210,000 miles (\$35,000); and, build a 40x50-foot storage facility by the salt dome for equipment (\$100,000). Director Cook pointed out that he doubled the budget for pole replacement (to \$120,000). We have an energetic crew; so, we will work to replace out some of the older poles in our system. Right now, we have some transformers in stock for those new customers that are going to pay for those; we also have a base of transformers that if there is an issue, we can handle it. Director Cook also noted that as of May 1, he will officially be chairman of IMEA.

Parks & Recreation Department

Director Mark Rosen announced this is my last time doing the budget. Changes in leadership will coincide with the start of Fiscal Year 2025-2026, with Brad Koehnemann as Director of Parks & Natural Resources and Laura Wilken as Director of Recreation & Events. Although there are multiple capital projects in the budget the department realizes are important, we will be focusing on making improvements through use of grants and while budgeting money into our reserves. We actively use Madison County grant programs for our parks. When I came in, in 1996, Glik Park was going in. I have kept a promise to continue to maintain all parks in the community. In the past year, we had the expansion of the cemetery to Block 21, and have already had a burial in that new area. We had several improvements to the KRC, installed a new roof on the Weinheimer Community Center, repaved the KRC parking lot, utilized grant Madison County grant funds to installed new play features at Silver Lake Park, and install shoreline stabilization in Old City Lake. With the new format of Tyler Software, I think it will help us in assessing costs.

Korte Recreation Center (KRC) (Page 107)

Manager Laura Wilken reported that, last year, we resurfaced the locker room floors. This year, we hope to do the pool deck (\$50,000), upgrades to the pool filtration and HVAC (\$300,000), and tuck-pointing and paint of west wall of pool area (\$50,000). We have seen our usage numbers jump tremendously; however, minimum wage has impacted our budget. Additionally, we have seen increases in rental of pavilions and after-hour parties at KRC. Normal Mondays are about 500 people coming through the door at KRC. We are hoping the Tyler Software will help us with accessing costs in relation to revenue streams. We are losing Cody, at the KRC. We are hoping to find someone that can share between the Rec Center, pool, and parks.

Swimming Pool (Page 123)

At the pool, we will continue to make minor improvements. Manager Wilken stated we do want to get railing on the steps down to the pool. We have already booked two out-of-town rentals for the pool, which is exciting. We will keep it going as long as possible.

Parks (Page 113)

Manager Brad Kohnemann stated in this budget year we want to continue to partner with Silver Lake property owners and install in-lake weir (\$100,000), construct pickleball courts (\$120,000), and purchase a mini-excavator/tractor to replace the 20-year old tractor, which is utilized at the parks and cemetery. Other projects include Weinheimer Parking Lot improvements; and, with grants and help of the Highland Quarterback Club (HQC), the football field will have lights, this fall, for the 300 kids playing football and the 150 cheerleaders.

Cemetery (Page 130)

At the cemetery, Manager Kohnemann stated, we will continue with improvements to the roads as well as maintenance throughout. We made it to Blocks 20 and 21, and we are slowly working our way up the hill towards Block 18. We have one of the largest municipal cemeteries south of Springfield.

City Manager Chris Conrad finished by noting we have budgeted about \$500,000 for project to add about thirty parking spaces around the downtown square. Mayor Hemann expressed I know the supervisors and directors have put a lot of time into this budget. He noted Director Gillespie highlighted making sure to keep maintain the streets all around town. Little things and little projects will make big impacts. Councilwoman Bellm added we have a great group of directors. Thank you!

REPORTS

Accepting Expenditures Reports #1286 for Mar. 1, 2025 through Mar. 14, 2025 – Councilman Frey made a motion to accepting Expenditures Report #1286 for March 1, 2025 through March 14, 2025 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 temporarily adjourn this regular session to enter into executive session under the Illinois Open Meetings Act under the following exemption: 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) to discuss the performance and compensation of a specific employee. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. Open Meeting temporarily adjourned at 8:06pm.

Mayor Hemann reconvened the Regular Session at 8:27pm. Council members Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper were present. Others in attendance were City Attorney McGinley, City Manager Conrad, Director Widman, Manager Stephanie Nicklin, Deputy City Clerks Hediger and Flake, and City Clerk Bellm.

NEW BUSINESS (Continued):

Bill #25-32/RESOLUTION Authorizing Employment Agreement Between City of Highland, Illinois, and Christopher Conrad, City Manager – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #25-32/Resolution #25-03-3171 authorizing employment agreement between City of Highland, Illinois, and Christopher Conrad, City Manager as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Frey. 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 Napper. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Frey, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Kevin B. Hemann, Mayor

Barbara Bellm, City Clerk