

**MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2025**

Mayor Kevin Hemann called the Regular Session to order at 6:30pm. Council members Sloan, Bellm and Napper were present. Councilman Frey was absent. Others in attendance were City Manager Conrad, City Attorney Kathryn Warren, Directors Cook, Gillespie, Rosen, and Ohren, Lt. Feeney, Coordinator Hubbard, Managers Kohnemann and Wilken, Treasurer Nicolaides, Deputy City Clerks Flake and Hediger, City Clerk Bellm, Councilman-Elect Klaus, and 19 citizens.

MINUTES

Councilwoman Sloan made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2025 Executive Session. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2025 Regular Session as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

MAYORAL RECOGNITIONS

Mayor Hemann recognized Supervisor Ron Donoho and the operators of Highland's Water Reclamation Facility who recently won the "Plant of the Year" award from the Illinois Association of Water Pollution Control Operators. Director Gillespie stated this was the fifth time nominated for this award. I am very proud of the plant and the staff we have out there at the plant. They are very dedicated to running it and taking care of it. We were up against a lot of other plants for this award. Director Gillespie introduced the staff: Ron Donoho, 28 years; Dan Neier, 27 years; and Brian Berberich, 2 ½ years.

Mayor Hemann recognized Rick Lallish, a Highland resident, who received a prestigious lifetime achievement award, being the "Clarence W. Klassen Outstanding Service Award" from the Illinois Association of Water Pollution Control Operators. Rick has had a long career as an instructor, training operators from all over the state. Mr. Lallish stated I started working in Greenville. In 2008, I started working at the Environmental Resources Training Center at SIU. He added I was on the nominating committee for the award Highland received. I want to say, it was a unanimous decision. The Highland Plant keeps its operations the cleanest, in good working order; and, they are the most knowledgeable group of guys.

Mayor Hemann recognized the Highland Music School, which is owned by Angelina McLaughlin-Heil. Ms. McLaughlin-Heil provided a short presentation about the Highland Music School, which started seven years ago. It has grown organically from its start at the Olde Wick's Factory, then to a medical building on Woodcrest, and now to a location on the downtown square. We have a lot of community support. We are very excited about all we have going on and our new location. The school and students are very involved in the community by providing entertainment at local events for other local

organizations, such as the Lions Club, Treats on the Streets, and Latzer Library. The school currently has 250 students that come through weekly and 22 faculty. Our new location allows us to have a dedicated art room now. The Highland Youth Orchestra, led by Mr. Allen, has three levels, from small children up to grown up classes. She stated we feel you are never too old to learn. It is very good for your brain. You don't have to take private lessons through us to participate in the group sessions. The orchestra has performed at Art in the Park, Pocahontas Mercantile, and in other neighboring communities. We are able to bring in groups from all around the area to expose our students to different instruments and all forms of music, especially things like string instruments, which are not common in local school programs.

Ms. McLaughlin-Heil stated we are asking for permission to host Painted Pianos, a music arts festival, in coordination with the drumming event. With this event, we hope to have the other businesses around the square participate by making hopscotch paths in front of each of their storefronts. She introduced some students from the school, who are part of the area homeschooling group, which were there to perform for those in attendance. Three violinists and a guitarist performed two songs.

PUBLIC FORUM

Citizens' Requests and Comments:

Highland Music School – Painted Pianos – Special Event Application – Angelina McLaughlin-Heil, stated we are requesting permission to do this event on May 3. The event will have music performances from 9am-1pm. The painted pianos will remain on the stage for a month. We will make sure they are moved out before Schweizerfest. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Highland Music School's request to host Focus on the Arts Festival with Painted Pianos on Downtown Square, on Saturday, May 3, 2025, 9am – 1pm per the Special Event Application. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Sloan. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Gauchos and Schlafly – Grill and Chill Spring Bash – Special Event Application – Ainara Farina, Representative, stated we are trying to do monthly theme events, as the weather gets warmer. Coming from big towns of Miami and New York, we enjoy the small community, neighborhood environment. We want to have live music, an open grilling area, and just an opportunity for people to come out, play some yard games, and hang out. We do not expect a big crowd, but you never know. Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Gauchos and Schlafly's request to hold the Grill and Chill Spring Bash, on Saturday, April 26, 2025, 1pm-7pm per the Special Event Application. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Sloan. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Tammy Nelson Burris stated she is here to present a pet washing station proposal for placement by the dog park. Currently, the closest one is in Swansea. Director Rosen reported we thought putting it at the dog park would make for a great location. Originally, we thought about placing it by the restrooms; however, there was concern about kids that may be afraid of dogs. We feel putting it closer to the dog park would be better. Councilwoman Bellm inquired what is our policy about private for-profit businesses located on city property. City Manager Conrad explained we would do this as a property lease. We have leased property for similar activities already. City Attorney McGinley would be working on drafting the lease, as he has done others for us in the past. We have some residential properties that we lease out. To solve encroachment issues, we have leases with others for property use. The kayaks rental kiosk at the lake is another example. While we are leasing to a private company in the park, it reinforces the purpose of the park. Councilwoman Sloan asked if they would be responsible for upkeep, and handling any mechanical issues or damages. City Manager Conrad replied yes. Ms. Nelson Burris added this is an enclosed unit that utilizes credit card or app. Mayor Hemann inquired this would be subject to

the hours of the park. City Manager Conrad responded yes. Councilman Napper asked if this company is an LLC. Ms. Nelson Burris stated she has applied for LLC status. Mayor Hemann summarized the council does not seem to have any objection. There is nothing to vote on at this time. City Manager Conrad stated we will work on the drafting a lease, if no objection, and bring this to council for a vote at the next meeting.

Yvonne Kaeser asked why the city's electric does not offer budget billing. I had bills of \$300, \$373; that is almost \$700 in two months. Why is there not budget billing? Southwestern and Ameren has it. City Manager Conrad responded the primary reason is that we do not have the software to do it. We are hopeful the new software we are implementing, right now, may allow us to do. Budget billing software is expensive to implement. We are in a multi-year project of installing new software. It is a totally different platform. We are in year three of a five-year process. It is supposed to have a more robust billing system and we are hopeful that in time, we can get to that. Mayor Hemann noted he had budget billing when we lived out of town. In December, we always got a shock, because we had to make up the difference. Sometimes it was lower, but more often than not, it was higher. Councilman Napper expressed concern about why the bill was so high for an apartment. Maybe you have something wrong. Possibly Dan can have a crew go out and check. Director Dan Cook stated we can; however, apartments are typically all electric and you will get that. City Manager Conrad added we did have an extraordinary long period of cold weather the past few months. If things are not insulated well, that can be expected. Ms. Kaeser stated her building was built in 2009; the hall is kept at 73 degrees. I keep it at 70 degrees in my apartment. I turn it up when I take a shower, and then turn it down again.

Requests of Council:

No comments or requests presented.

Staff Reports:

City Manager Chris Conrad reported, today, we sent out a community survey for the city's Sidewalk and Trails Master Plan on the app and social media. We encourage people to go on and participate in the survey. The information is used for our planning, and included in grant application submittals.

Mayor Hemann acknowledged the election that was held last week. For city council, Peg Bellm is going to be returning and Garry Klaus was elected to the council.

NEW BUSINESS

Making Tentative Budget for FY 2025-2026 Available for Public Review at City Hall And Setting the Public Hearing Date for 6:30 PM on Monday, April 21, 2025 at the Highland City Hall, 1115 Broadway – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve making the tentative budget for FY 2025-2026 available for public review at City Hall and setting the public hearing date for 6:30 PM on Monday, April 21, 2025 at the Highland City Hall, 1115 Broadway as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Sloan. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #25-33/RESOLUTION Approving Application and Awarding Certain Financial Incentives Under the City of Highland Façade Improvement Program To Cliff and Jan Couch for 1101 Broadway, Highland, Illinois – Councilwoman Sloan made a motion to approve Bill #25-33/Resolution #25-04-3172 approving application and awarding certain financial incentives under the City of Highland Façade Improvement Program to Cliff and Jan Couch for 1101 Broadway, Highland, Illinois as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. City Manager Conrad stated the city had looked at this particular

building, several years ago. The title issues prevented the city from taking it on. Thanks to Cliff and Jan for taking this project on. Council agreed the building is beautiful. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #25-34/RESOLUTION Approving and Authorizing the Fair Solar Credit for May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026 Pursuant to Section 78-185 of the City Code - Councilwoman Sloan made a motion to approve Bill #25-34/Resolution #25-04-3173 approving and authorizing the Fair Solar Credit for May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026 pursuant to Section 78-185 of the City Code as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. City Manager Conrad reported the rate is tied to the Illinois Power Agency auction. Last year, the price was relatively high. This year it is returning to a more status quo rate. Mayor Hemann noted this is something we approved every year. City Manager Conrad replied yes. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Bill #25-35/RESOLUTION Waiving Customary Bidding Procedures and Authorizing The Purchase of a TA60 Bucket Truck From Altec Industries Under the Sourcewell Program – Councilman Napper made a motion to approve Bill #25-35/Resolution #25-04-3174 waiving customary bidding procedures and authorizing the purchase of a TA60 Bucket Truck from Altec Industries, in the amount of \$362,348.00, under the Sourcewell Program as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. City Manager Conrad pointed out that Items D & E, on the agenda, are both purchases covered by Illinois Municipal Code statue for Non-Home Rule communities that allows for purchasing under pre-negotiated government pricing programs. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Mayor Hemann voted aye. Motion carried.

Bill #25-36/RESOLUTION Waiving Customary Bidding Procedures and Authorizing The Purchase of a DM47E 47' Hydraulic Digger Derrick From Altec Industries Under the Sourcewell Program – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to approve Bill #25-36/Resolution #25-04-3175 waiving customary bidding procedures and authorizing the purchase of a DM47E 47' Hydraulic Digger Derrick from Altec Industries, in the amount of \$373,908.00, under the Sourcewell Program as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Sloan. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Mayor Hemann voted aye. Motion carried.

Bill #25-37/RESOLUTION Waiving Competitive Bidding Requirement and Approving And Authorizing the Purchase of a New Brandon 11-Foot Dump With Tarp System Truck Bed, Toolbox and Backup Camera From CSTK in St. Louis, Missouri for \$25,000.00 – Councilwoman Sloan made a motion to approve Bill #25-37/Resolution #25-04-3176 waiving competitive bidding requirement and approving and authorizing the purchase of a New Brandon 11-Foot Dump with Tarp System Truck Bed, Toolbox and Backup Camera from CSTK in St. Louis, Missouri for \$25,000.00 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. City Manager Conrad explained this one is actually a true waiver of customary bidding procedure. It does fall right at the \$25,000. The pricing was very close on the bids; however, CSTK would be able to deliver this within a few weeks versus seventeen weeks. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Mayor Hemann voted aye. Motion carried.

Bill #25-38/RESOLUTION Waiving Competitive Bidding Requirement and Approving And Authorizing the Purchase of a Ford Police Explorer Interceptor SUV for City Police Department, From Morrow Brothers Ford for \$46,000.00, Through the State of Illinois Joint Purchasing Program – Councilman Napper made a motion to approve Bill #25-38/Resolution #25-04-3177 waiving competitive bidding requirement and approving and authorizing the purchase of a Ford Police Explorer Interceptor SUV for City Police Department, from Morrow Brothers Ford for \$46,000.00, through the State of Illinois Joint Purchasing Program as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. City Manager Conrad stated, like Sourcewell, this one is through the state's joint purchasing program. Roll Call Vote:

Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Mayor Hemann voted aye. Motion carried.

Bill #25-39/ORDINANCE Approving Rezoning of Real Estate, Owned by the City of Highland, Illinois, From “R-1-C” Single Family Residential District to “I” Industrial, Specifically: PPN 01-1-24-06-00-000-024 – Councilwoman Sloan made a motion to approve Bill #25-39/Ordinance #3386 approving rezoning of real estate, owned by the City of Highland, Illinois, from “R-1-C” Single Family Residential District to “I” Industrial, specifically: PPN 01-1-24-06-00-000-024 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Bellm. Mayor Hemann noted this one was approved, last week, at the Planning & Zoning meeting. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Accepting Expenditures Reports #1287 for Mar. 15, 2025 through Apr. 4, 2025 – Councilwoman Bellm made a motion to accepting Expenditures Reports #1287 for March 15, 2025 through April 4, 2025 as attached. Motion seconded by Councilman Napper. Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Sloan, 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, Bellm and Napper voted aye, none nay. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:23pm.

Kevin B. Hemann, Mayor

Barbara Bellm, City Clerk