

**Enrolled Memorandum of the Meeting
Study Session/Meeting Convened Electronically/Hybrid
Twenty-Ninth Town Council of Highland
Monday, May 3, 2021**

The Twenty-Ninth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met *electronically* in a study session on **Monday, May 3, 2021** at 6:30 O'clock P.M., in the regular place, the Highland Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana.*

***Special note:** This meeting was convened allowing members of the Town Council to participate electronically without being physically present, or to be physically present, to be counted in the quorum and able to simultaneously listen and respond to matters taken up in the meeting, all pursuant to Governor Holcomb's Executive Orders 20-04 and 20-09, extended by Executive Order No. 21-11 allowing meetings to be convened, pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-3.6 for the duration of the Corona Virus COVID 19 Emergency through May 31, 2021. All members of the Town Council participated electronically with the Clerk-Treasurer participating as well. The electronic platform also allowed the public to observe and participate from on-line access. Councilor Herak and the Town Council President were also present in the usual plenary meeting room.

The meeting was streamed live on the Town of Highland, Indiana Facebook page and participation was supported by the Zoom on-line communication platform.

Silent Roll Call: Councilors Bernie Zemen, Mark Herak, Mark J. Schocke, Tom Black and Roger Sheeman were present (electronically) as indicated. The Clerk-Treasurer, Michael W. Griffin was present to memorialize the proceedings (electronically). A quorum was attained.

Officials Present: John P. Reed, Town Attorney; Peter T. Hojnicky, Police Chief; Mark Knesek, Public Works Director; William Timmer, and Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Redevelopment Director, were also present, participating electronically.

Additional Officials Present: Ed Dabrowski, IT Consultant (Contract) and Board of Waterworks Directors, (electronically); was present. (electronically).

Guests: Robin Carlascio of the Idea Factory was also present (electronically).

General Substance of Matters Discussed.

1. **Discussion:** *Does the Council wish to receive any further information or a revised approach to the recently filed for ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVITALIZATION APPLICATION of Webb Hyundai? If not, this should be set for action at a plenary meeting regarding its disposition.*

It was acknowledged that the Town Council met in Executive Session with representatives of Webb Hyundai regarding an expansion at its current location and an abatement plan.

The Redevelopment Director noted that she had contacted Dan Botich of S.E.H., a financial analyst that consults with the Redevelopment Commission. She noted that it might be beneficial to have him prepare some alternative scenarios to consider rather than the one proposed by Webb Hyundai's representatives.

The discussion included considering a presentation at the next meeting to consider some alternatives that might be posed to Webb Hyundai, if there was willingness by the Town Council to favorably consider the petition seeking tax abatement.

It was noted that Fuzzyline Brewery, a new business that relocated to the Town of Highland at the site of the former Franco's, 2721 Condit, in Highland. It was noted that an official grand opening was slated for Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

- 2. Discussion:** *Authorizing a special meeting for the first portion of the Study Session on May 17 to allow for a Public Hearing on proposed uses of the Community Development Block Grant Funding for Highland in the amount of \$102,130. The Public Works Director needs to file by May 21 to remain eligible for the allocation.*

The Town Council and the Clerk-Treasurer discussed its consent to allow for a special meeting to start its Study Session for May 17 to allow for the legally required public hearing on the proposed uses for the awarded CDBG proceeds of \$102,130.

The Town Council offered no objection to the special meeting, noting it would be authorized at the May 10 plenary meeting.

The Town Council discussed the former uses of this money for sidewalk replacement. It was noted that the money is tasked with serving persons of low to moderate incomes. The discussion extended to the ways and means of sidewalk replacement and the utilization of Highland Municipal Code Section 8:10.080, which provides for the use of Barret Law to recover costs via assessment for the installation of sidewalks if other approaches don't avail.

The discussion included an extended colloquy regarding the policy of the Town to inspect and grade the condition of sidewalks in the town and use this as a basis for maintenance. This was also discussed during the study session of April 6, 2020.

- 3. Discussion:** Should there be a policy regarding using COVID Leave when a worker does not wish to take the vaccine and comes down with COVID.

The Town Council and the Public Works Director discussed whether there should be modification to the current covid leave policy to bar its use for workers who do have chosen not to have the COVID Vaccinations. It was noted that this might not apply to workers who may have a special medical exemption for a bonafide health issue or for reasons of religion.

Following this discussion, the Town Council President asked that an ordinance amending the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance be prepared for the consideration of the Town Council at its plenary meeting on May 10 that would modify the policy as discussed.

- 4. Discussion:** *Appointments to vacancies for MAIN STREET BUREAU and COMMUNITY EVENTS COMMISSION.*

The Town Council President noted the several applications that were submitted from residents to be considered for appointment to either the Community Events Commission or the Main Street Bureau of the Redevelopment Department.

It was noted that the community garden would likely be maintained by the Main Street Bureau generally and at least two prospective appointees in particular.

The Town Council President noted that he hoped for some of the appointments to be made on Monday. He urged the members of the Town Council to review the applications and applicants to be ready for some action at the plenary meeting.

It was also noted that two candidates for possible appointment to the Tree Board were still being sought as well.

5. **Ad Hoc Discussion:** *Situation with imminent vacancies in the positions of Code Enforcement Officer and Electrical Inspector.* Councilor Herak noted there were two positions that would soon be vacated owing to scheduled or planned resignations of the incumbents in the positions of Code Enforcement Officer and Electrical Inspector.

The Town Council discussed the idea that perhaps one position be converted to a full-time position. It was noted that the volume of activity that was subject to enforcement but could not be addressed owing to the current staffing authorizations. It was further noted that finding a suitable and trained candidate to succeed to the position of the Electrical Inspector was challenging.

It was further discussed that the police officer that was detailed to code enforcement had been withdrawn owing to the staff demands of the police department. It was further noted that the expected vacancies were likely to occur by June 1.

There being no further business necessary or desired to be discussed by the Town Council, the *electronically convened* regular study session of the Town Council of **Monday, May 3, 2021**, was adjourned by the Town Council President at 8:05 O'clock p.m.

Michael W. Griffin, IAMC/MMC/CPFA/ACPFIM/CMO
Clerk-Treasurer