

**Enrolled Memorandum of the Meeting
Study Session/Meeting Hybrid Electronic/In-person
Twenty-Ninth Town Council of Highland
Monday, November 01, 2021**

The Twenty-Ninth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met in a study session on **Monday, November 01, 2021**, at 6:30 O'clock P.M., in the regular place, the Highland Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana.

This meeting was convened as *in person meeting*. Some persons were participating remotely on a Zoom platform that allowed for real time interaction with the Town Council and supported the public's ability to observe and record the proceedings. People were able to participate in person and remotely. However, Councilors Zemen, Herak, Schocke, Black and Sheeman -- all members of the Highland Town Council were present in person at the plenary meeting room for the meeting.

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

Officials Present: John P. Reed, Town Attorney (remotely); and Ed Dabrowski, Director of Information Technology; were also present.

Guests: Theresa Badovich, in person and Robin Carlascio for the Idea Factory (remotely); and Dean Smith of the Community Events Commission (remotely) were present, with those participating remotely using the Zoom platform.

General Substance of Matters Discussed.

1. **Discussion:** (Presentation) *Explore and see demonstration of ClearGov® Software Platform designed to promote financial Transparency in real time; compatible with current finance and accounting software.*

Mr. Michael Lanza, via Zoom, presented ClearGov®, a web based software platform that supports budgetary management and would allow existing financial activity to be displayed on the Town Website in an accessible manner to the members of the Town Council, the Clerk-Treasurer and the Director of Information Technology. It was noted that this software was well compatible with the existing finance and accounting software for the Town.

The Town Council asked about merits of the budgeting module and the discrete transparency module. It was noted that Martinsville was an Indiana government client. The discussion included the examining how the website would be integrated with the Town's existing website. It was noted that already 320 municipalities use the software nationwide.

It was further noted that the program usually would cost approximately \$25,000 with a \$5,400 one time set up fee. The discussion included the concern of the Clerk-Treasurer regarding the intention to migrate from the current chart of accounts to the prescribed chart of accounts proffered by the State Board of Accounts in the new year. It was supposed that any new software might be well delayed until the new chart of accounts is installed and operative.

2. **Discussion:** *Explore the idea of compensation for the members of the Community Events Commission.* The Town Council and Dean Smith of the Community Events Commission discussed the ways and manner in which the Community events

Commission membership might be compensated. It was noted that Mr. Smith as president of the Commission discussed the issue with the other commission members at a recent meeting. It was noted that a per meeting method may not be desirable or as favored by most members.

The discussion explored the possibility of paying commissioners for participation at each of the major special events, including the parades and the annual independence Day Festival. Commission President Smith noted that the paying for events seemed to have a better reception from his members.

The discussion included the continuation of a beer garden as a feature of the annual Independence Day Festival. It was noted that its revenue generation was desirable in order to make any compensation plan be sustainable. The discussion included staffing levels and the possible continuation of offering stipends to civic groups or clubs to provide volunteer labor to support the beer garden.

It was further suggested that except for the possible changes for the Community Events Commission, perhaps that the concept of the pay by meeting, and its complicating elements allowing some pay even for some missed meetings not be pursued. There was no further discussion regarding whether any increase to the boards and commission compensation would be pursued.

3. **Discussion:** *Marketing Brochure and work for the Downtown. (Idea Factory)* The Town Council and Theresa Badovich discussed the possible use of the Innkeeper Tax Fund money to support the costs associated with developing a promotional brochure for the downtown.

This was an initiative of the Main Street Bureau and the Redevelopment Department. It is before the Town Council because of the rejected request to publish legal notice of proposed additional appropriations for this project in the Innkeeper Tax Fund.

Ms. Badovich provided several mock up samples of possible brochures that could be developed in counts of 10,000 or 20,000. It was further noted that there were more than 100 businesses in the downtown area.

The discussion explored whether brochures were an effective medium of promotion in the current electronic devise dominant zeitgeist. The discussion also noted that the enabling law and the enabling ordinance provide that the lawful use of the Innkeeper Tax monies is for economic development and promoting visitors.

4. **Discussion:** *Request by Public Works Director to amend the wages for the utility worker/Equipment Operator B by 50¢ per hour.* The Town Council noted that requested change. It was determined that the requested amending ordinance be prepared and placed on the agenda and get added information from the Public Works Director at the plenary meeting.
5. **Discussion:** *Request by Public Works Director to approve the hire of a full-time employee to the position of Utility Worker B at \$13.18 per hour, which is its authorized rate.* The Town Council reviewed the request for the appointment. There was no objection to placing the matter on the agenda for the plenary meeting.
6. **Discussion:** Request by the Police Department for an Appropriation Transfer within the Police Department of the General Fund, reducing the lance corporation salary line by \$29,321 and increasing several supply lines by the same total amount. The Town Council and the Clerk-Treasurer reviewed the request from the police department to draw from the existing appropriations for the lance corporals and repurpose it for

certain supply lines. There was no objection to placing it on the agenda of the plenary meeting.

7. **Ad Hoc Discussion Topic:** *Parking time limits on Jewett Street in the downtown.* The Town Council President noted that the Traffic Safety Commission was considering eliminating the parking time limits on the south side of Jewett Street in the downtown to accommodate the merchants and their workers.
8. **Ad Hoc Discussion Topic:** *Norfolk and Southern Rail Road Line, running north and south from Main Street to Highway Avenue in the Highland Downtown.* The Town Council President explored the merits or desirability of seeking to make the changes to the crossings of this line that would require installation of gates at all crossings and perhaps the added barriers that are installed when a Train Whistle Free Zone for the crossings are established.

It was noted that INDOT announced a new round of grants that might support such an effort. It was noted that the process was long and the costs were notable.

9. **Ad Hoc Discussion Topic:** *Information from recent conversation with the Griffith Town Council President.* The Town Council President reported that the Town of Griffith would soon be bonding to retrofit and reconstruct its current town hall. Further he reported that Griffith would be bonding to replace and repair EVERY sidewalk in the Town.

There being no further matters to discuss , the Town Council President adjourned the standing study session of Monday, November 01, 2021, at 8:45 o'clock p.m.

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