

**Enrolled Memorandum of the Meeting
Study Session/Meeting (Convened Electronically/Hybrid)
Thirtieth Town Council of Highland
Monday, July 29, 2024**

The Thirtieth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met in a study session on **Monday, July 29, 2024**, 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 an in person meeting and lived streamed to the Town of Highland Facebook. Facebook permits the public to observe and record the proceedings but allows no interaction between and among the Town Council and members of the public. The public is able to participate in person. All councilors were simultaneously seen and heard. Councilor Georgeff, Councilor Doug Turich, Councilor Black, Councilor Alex Robertson, Councilor Philip Scheeringa all participated in person.

Silent Roll Call: Councilors George Georgeff, Doug Turich, Tom Black, Alex Robertson, Philip Scheeringa, were present in person as indicated. The Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak was present to memorialize the proceedings. *A quorum was attained.*

Officials Present: IT Director Ed Dabrowski, Metropolitan Police Chief Ralph Potesta, Maria Becerra, Redevelopment Director were in person.

General Substance of Matters Discussed.

Appointments:

• Statutory Boards and Commissions

Executive Appointments (May be made in meeting or at another time)

1. **Waterworks Board of Directors:** (1) appointment to be made by Town Council President. *(Note: Formerly held by Curt Schroeder (D), term ending 1st Monday January 2025). Current composition of the board is two Republicans and two Democrats. No more than three of any one party under state law.*

Home Rule Commissions or Boards

2. **Shared Ethics Advisory Commission.** (1) appointment to be made by Town Council President. *(Note: Fill vacancy made by resignation of Rev. Tim Huizenga.) (Made pursuant to Article 5, Subdivision (A) of the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement Establishing the Shared Ethics Entity. Qualifications are to be persons who live work or hold property in the county. Further persons appointed must be of good character and not hold any positions within the local government.)*

Legislative Appointments

Home Rule Commissions

1. **Main Street Bureau Board:** (6) appointments to be made by the Town Council. Term: Two years ending 1 Jan 2025. *There are currently 11 of the 17 in place and serving. Currently serving are Rhonda Bloch, Ben Reinhart, Renee Reinhart, Allan Simmons, Diane Barr-Roumbus, James Roumbus, Sandra McKnight, Teri Yovkovich, Sandy Ray, Kathy Smailis, Ben Tomera and Laura Pilewski.*
2. **Community Events Commission Multi-year positions:** (1) appointment to be made by the Town Council. **Term: 4 years.** *(Note: Currently vacant)*

Single year positions: (9) appointments to be made by the Town Council. **Term: 1 year.** There are currently 5 of the 9 in place and serving. *(Note: Currently serving, Rachael Carter, Olga Briseno, Kathy Camp-Burke, Linda Carter and Jack Rowe)*

x. **Discussion:** Installation of a fence around Main Square

- (1) Engineering & design (4' or 6', ingress & egress to accommodate carnival rides)
- (2) cost to be determined
- (3) approval to spend from the Redevelopment Commission

Councilor Scheeringa asked Councilor Turich what was the status of the RFP for the engineering of the fence around Main Square.

Councilor Turich responded that he had talked to the Park Board and the Park Board said they would champion the project but the costs have to be borne by the Redevelopment Commission.

Councilor Georgeff said he talked with the park superintendent and he doesn't feel the park superintendent is interested in doing the project.

Councilor Scheeringa said that once they get the engineering down, they will need to get revised pricing as the pricing they currently have is five (5) years old and prices have increased since then. He added that is the purpose of establishing a capital plan is to see what projects can or cannot be done and determine a funding source. The fence may be a project put off till next year.

The Council asked the Redevelopment Director to place the approval of engineering for the fence around Main Square on the next Redevelopment Commission Agenda.

Maria said Redevelopment has an open purchase order with Nies Engineering and will add the engineering of the fence to the open purchase order.

Councilor Turich said the fence was to be wrought iron with brick and mortar as the supports which will give it a more classical look.

x. **Discussion:** Highway Avenue & Jewett Street Streetscape

- (1) engineering & design
- (2) cost to be determined
- (3) approval to spend from the Redevelopment Commission

Councilor Turich asked that Councilor Robertson was going to reach out to Derek Snyder of Nies Engineering to do some analysis on whether the decorative poles could support the additional load from the guide wires. He wanted to know if the request was followed up with or did it just fall on deaf ears?

Councilor Robertson responded that he did reach out to Derek who responded back today that, he does have some reservations but he will have one of his partners do the analysis on whether the poles could accommodate the additional load. Derek said the span is 70' but less at the intersections or roughly 36'. He said he'll have his partner do calculations for both widths. Derek felt the diameter of the decorative poles and the poles thickness would not support the additional load. He was concerned also, that the height of the poles wouldn't accommodate traffic passing underneath considering the sag in the lights. Derek hoped to have the calculations by the next study session. Alex said he worked with Maria today and completed the new RFP which he hopes to advertise soon. Some of the contractors have expressed different ideas that might work. One of the ideas is to seek permission from the building owners and attach the guide wires to the buildings.

Councilor Turich wanted to know when the RRP would be ready for distribution. Councilor Robertson said he hopes to have the Idea Factory post the RFP on the website by the Council's study session of August 5th and have the responses back in time so the responses back so the Main Street Bureau can make a recommendation to Redevelopment by their second meeting in August, so the Redevelopment Commission can vote on the proposals at their September 11th meeting with the hope that the lights can be installed before the holidays. .

x. **Discussion:** Highland's Roadway Lighting LED Upgrade Project

- (1) Ridge Road, Main Street, + - \$300,000 (85 light standards)
- (2) Engineering – Nies Engineering - \$35,400
- (3) cost – Ridge Road only– from 2022 – \$200,000 (approximately 65 light standards)
- (4) estimated pay back seven (7) years
- (5) approval to spend from Redevelopment Commission

The Council was under the impression that the engineering for the entire project was approved and they would start with Ridge Road 1st. The Clerk-Treasurer advised that the engineering wasn't approved and the Public Works Director was not aware he was to proceed with the engineering.

Councilor Robertson was going to reach out to the public works director and get an update on the engineering and report back to the Council by its meeting of August 5th.

Councilor Black asked if there were any grants available as the new lights would be more energy efficient. He thought Nipsco use to offer a grant.

The Redevelopment Director said she would check into it and if the engineering wasn't approved, she said she would put it on the Redevelopment Commission's next meeting.

Councilor Scheeringa said the payback would be in seven (7) years.

x. Discussion: Welcome to Highland Sign

- (1) Engineering – Nies Engineering
- (2) cost – new electric feed \$18,000 – \$20,000 (approximately)
- (3) approval to spend from Redevelopment Commission

Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra said she received Hyre's proposal this morning and it is less than that of Midwestern Electric. She said Hyre's quote was \$13,680 and Midwestern's quote came in at \$15,750. She said she bounced it off the electrical inspector, Nick Russo, who said everything appeared in order. Maria said the funding is already in place and they need to start to move on it.

Councilor Turich wanted to know what sign they were talking about and what electrical work needed to be done?

Maria said it was the sign off of Ridge Road and the power supply and underground wire will be replaced. She said both are old and need replacing as water has gotten into the conduit and short circuited the wires. They are also installing two (2) breakers. The breakers will be installed in the traffic control cabinets.

**X. DISCUSSION: UPGRADES NEEDED AT THE HIGHWAY OF FLAGS &
DECORATIVE LIGHTS (TO RR CROSSING)**

- (1) cost – new electric feed \$9,920 (Emcor Hyre Electric quote)
- (2) replace water main (tap into the water main on Ridge Road)
- (3) Engineering – to be determined
- (4) cost to be determined (tap into the water main on Ridge Road)
- (5) funds to come from Highway of Flags escrow account

The Clerk-Treasurer explained that they have a quote for the electric from Hyre Electric but they still need to get with the public works director to get a cost and determine if engineering is required to tap into the water line on Ridge Road. He said money to pay for the costs would come out of the Highway of Flags escrow account. He advised that one lane of Ridge Road would have to be closed down to complete the tap. He said that with the exception of replacing the flags or painting the emblems, not much maintenance had been performed on the monument.

Councilor Robertson, who is liaison to public works, said he will get a hold of the public works director and give the Council an update at its August 5th meeting. Councilor Robertson said public works would do the work.



2655 Garfield Avenue
Highland, IN 46322
(219) 923-6100

Town of Highland
3333 Ridge Road
Highland, IN 46322
Attn: Nick Russo

7/19/2024

Subject: Ridge and Indianapolis New Service, Flag Lighting, and Outlet Repairs

Greetings:

In accordance with your request, we are pleased to submit our proposal to perform the necessary electrical work in connection with the subject project, as outlined below:

Scope of Work:

- Furnish and install (1) 100-amp 120/240-volt meter and panel to replace existing. The new panel and meter will be relocated near the parking lot.
- Furnish and install photocell-controlled contactor for lighting and outlets in front of wall.
- Replace and repair (5) outdoor GFCI boxes on north side of wall. This includes new boxes, new weather resistant covers and weather resistant GFCIs.
- Furnish and install (5) 5000K LED lights on top of wall to illuminate flags. This lighting will be completed using rigid conduit.
- Furnish and install (2) new LED flood lights on south side of wall near bench. New boxes and covers will be used.

Total Amount Due to Customer	\$9,920.00
Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Dollars and No Cents	

Exclusions

- Coordination studies, changes due to coordination studies, or utility fees of any kind.
- Overtime (All above work has been quoted during normal working hours namely 7am to 3:30pm)
- Landscaping or grass repairs.

Sincerely,
EMCOR HYRE ELECTRIC CO. OF INDIANA, INC.

Matt Sandberg, Service Manager

Any deviation from the above specification will be executed only upon written orders, which may possibly credit or incur additional charges to this proposal. Payment is to be made every thirty (30) days for labor and all materials, with final payment to be made thirty (30) days after completion. If it is necessary for Seller to institute Legal Proceedings against Buyer to collect any indebtedness due to enforce any of these Terms and Conditions, Seller shall be entitled to recover from Buyer Pre-Judgment Interest at 1.5% per Month, Court Costs, Attorney's Fees, and all other Costs of Collection. Workmen will be properly covered by workmen's compensation and public liability insurance, certificate of which may be obtained upon request. All work covered in this proposal will be performed in a workmanlike manner, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Local Department of Electricity. Any work that is found to be obstructed by public or private utilities will be addressed as a change in price. Price is valid for 10 days and subject to change based on market fluctuations.

Upon acceptance of this proposal, please sign below and return one copy to our office authorizing commencement of work.

SIGNATURE _____ Date _____

- x. **Discussion:** Request from the Tree Board to amend the Parkway Ordinance No. 1670 to permit the Town to contract with a professional arborist tree service to prune trees identified as hazardous in the parkways. To establish a line item in the 2025 Budget within the MVH Fund called Pruning of Hazard Trees (or some other name to be determined) and to fund it at \$19,000. Currently, it is the responsibility of the homeowner to prune the trees in the parkway. The Town only prunes trees in the parkway when a branch or limb is blocking a stop sign or traffic control signal or as the aftermath of a storm and the branch or limb is viewed as a hazard to public safety. The Council might want to expand this discussion to include the pruning of trees along Highway & Jewett.

Councilor Georgeff said he is in favor of having Rich Underkofler apply for the grant and if the Town should be awarded the grant, then use the money to fix our house first, to trim and prune the trees along Highway, Jewett and in the parks. Public Works Director would oversee the money and spend and if there is any money left over, then the Town could look at pruning trees in the parkway. He felt the Town should take advantage of the grant.

Councilor Scheeringa asked Councilor Georgeff if the money from the grant could be used for the purposes described by Councilor Georgeff.

Councilor Georgeff said he didn't know but would get an answer from Richard Underkofler and report back to the Council by the August 5th meeting.

Mark Herak

From: Richard Underkofler <runderkofler76@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 6:36 PM
To: George Georgeff; jpratlaw@aol.com
Cc: Phil Scheeringa; Doug Turich; Alex Robertson; Tom Black; Mark Herak; Mark Kneseck
Subject: Re: CUFA Grant reminder

I listened to the discussion at this week's Council meeting on Facebook.

1. May the 50% local match for the grant be pledged from the General Fund, rather than the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund?
2. Will the Council mitigate the Town's liability for damages to persons and property from fallen parkway branches and trees by amending the parkway tree ordinance so that homeowners will not be held responsible?

Richard Underkofler
Cell: 312-550-4478

On Jul 31, 2024, at 5:37 PM, George Georgeff <g.georgeff@highland.in.gov> wrote:

Rich
We discussed the grant and I asked if the entire amount of funds be used for town properties and public safety around stop signs etc. we have a lot of trees on Highway and Jewett that need to be pruned. We would probably use all the funds the first year. Just want to make sure we can do that.

George Georgeff

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From: runderkofler76@comcast.net <runderkofler76@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2024 9:39:48 AM
To: Phil Scheeringa <pscheeringa@highland.in.gov>; George Georgeff <g.georgeff@highland.in.gov>; Doug Turich <dturich@highland.in.gov>; Alex Robertson <arobertson@highland.in.gov>; Tom Black <tblack@highland.in.gov>; Mark Herak <mherak@highland.in.gov>
Cc: Mark Kneseck <mkneseck@highland.in.gov>
Subject: FW: CUFA Grant reminder

This is a grant that could fund 50% of a pruning services contract. The local match would come from the General Fund, rather than the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund. Please make a timely decision on this to enable preparation and submission of an application.

Richard Underkofler, Secretary
Tree Board
Cell: (312) 550-4478

- x. **Discussion:** Update on Auto-Aid Agreement with Griffith, Munster and Schererville & authorization for Town Council President to sign the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement.

Councilor Scheeringa said he had heard from Chief Mike Pipta earlier in the day and Griffith had approved the multi-party Auto-Aid Agreement. The Chief said he would forward a copy to both Councilor Scheeringa and Attorney Reed. Councilor Scheeringa asked Attorney Reed to review the document as he would like to have the agreement on the August 12 plenary meeting agenda.

The Clerk-Treasurer commented that Resolution No. 2024-17 authorizing the Council President to sign the agreement was complete and sent, along with the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement was sent to Attorney Reed for his review. If Attorney Reed is fine with the documents, they can be placed on the August 12th plenary meeting agenda.

Resolution No. 2024-17

TOWN OF HIGHLAND, TOWN OF MUNSTER, TOWN OF GRIFFITH, TOWN OF SCHERERVILLE, TOWN OF DYER, CITY OF HOBART, CITY OF CROWN POINT, CITY OF WHITING, CITY OF LAKE STATION, CITY OF GARY, TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE, TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, TOWN OF NEW CHICAGO, TOWN OF ST. JOHN, TOWN OF WINFIELD, TOWN OF SCHNEIDER, TOWN OF LOWELL, LAKE HILLS (ST. JOHN & SCHERERVILLE) ALL LOCATED IN LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA

A Resolution Confirming and Acknowledging the Agreement made and entered into by and between the above referenced Units of local government pertaining to an Interlocal Government Agreement pertaining to the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System and all matters related thereto.

WHEREAS, The Towns of Highland, Munster, Griffith, Schererville, St. John, Dyer, Cedar Lake, Merrillville, New Chicago, Lowell, Schneider, Lake Hills (St. John and Schererville) and the Cities of Gary, Whiting, Lake Station, Hobart, Crown Point (the "Units") are each a municipal corporate entity organized and existing as units of local government in Lake County, Indiana, in conformance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, The Towns of Highland, Munster, Griffith, Schererville, St. John, Dyer, Cedar Lake, Merrillville, New Chicago, Lowell, Schneider, Lake Hills (St. John and Schererville) and the Cities of Gary, Whiting, Lake Station, Hobart, Crown Point (the "Units") are each governed by a duly elected Legislative Body, known herein after as the Units; and

WHEREAS, The Units have been informed and advised that they are authorized by the terms and provisions of Indiana Code §36-1-7-1, et seq., as amended from time to time, to enter into agreements with participating governmental units so as to provide better public services and facilities to the residents of the participating Towns and as units of local government; and

WHEREAS, The provisions of Indiana Code §36-1-7-1, et seq., as amended from time to time, provides that any one or more public agencies may contract with any one or more public agencies to perform any government service, activity or undertaking which any of the public agencies entering into the agreement is authorized by law to perform, provided that such agreement shall be authorized by the governing body of each party to the agreement; and

WHEREAS, The Units have been further informed and advised that other like municipalities and units of local government located in Lake County, Indiana, are also entities empowered and authorized by the terms and provisions of Indiana Code §36-1-7-1, et seq., as amended from time to time, to enter into agreements with other local governmental units for the purposes of better providing public services and facilities for the mutual benefit of the participating governmental units; and

WHEREAS, It is the desire of the Units to enter into the Interlocal Governmental Agreement for the purposes of coordination of mutual aid through the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System is desirable for the effective and efficient provision of mutual aid; and

WHEREAS, It is recognized and acknowledged that in certain situations, such as, but not limited to, emergencies, natural disasters and man-made catastrophes, the use of an individual Member Unit's personnel and equipment to perform functions outside of territorial limits of the Member Unit is desirable and necessary to preserve and protect health, safety and welfare of the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND, IN LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The President of the Town Council is hereby authorized to execute the Joint Interlocal Governmental Agreement, hereafter known as the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement between the Towns of Highland, Munster, Griffith, Schererville, St. John, Dyer, Cedar Lake, Merrillville, New Chicago, Lowell, Schneider, Lake Hills (St. John and Schererville) and the Cities of Gary, Whiting, Lake Station, Hobart, Crown Point to secure to each the benefits of mutual aid in fire protection, firefighting and the protection of life and property from an emergency or disaster.

SECTION 2. That the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System shall be signed in counterparts and each of said counterparts shall be considered an original.

SECTION 3. The signatories of the Units participating in this enabling Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement are authorized and permitted to enter into the Interlocal Agreement to provide for communications procedures, training and to secure to each the benefits of mutual aid in fire protection, firefighting and the disaster.

SECTION 4: The Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement attached hereto and marked as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein by referenced by an among the Towns of Highland, Munster, Griffith, Schererville, St. John, Dyer, Cedar Lake, Merrillville, New Chicago, Lowell, Schneider, Lake Hills (St. John and Schererville) and the Cities of Gary, Whiting, Lake Station, Hobart, Crown Point that before the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement takes effect, it must be recorded with the Office of the Lake County Recorder. No later than sixty (60) days after it takes effect and is recorded, the agreement must be filed with the Office of the State Board of Accounts for audit purposes, all pursuant to I.C. 36-1-7-6.

SECTION 5: Each Unit approving the attached Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement verifies that the participating signatory has reviewed and taken all necessary and properly public meeting action for approval and entry into the attached Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement at a duly scheduled and noticed public meeting pursuant to applicable State law.

SECTION 6: Schedule of Implementation. That this Resolution shall take effect, and be in full force and effect, from and after the date of its passage and adoption upon its signature by the executive in the manner prescribed by I.C. 36-5-2-10(a) and under the terms found in Section 4 of this agreement.

DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this 12th Day of August 2024 by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of in favor and opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

Philip Scheeringa, President (I.C. 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak, Clerk-Treasurer
(I.C. 33-16-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5)

MUTUAL AID BOX ALARM SYSTEM

AGREEMENT

This Agreement made and entered into the date set forth next to the signature of the respective parties, by and between the units of local government subscribed hereto

(hereafter "Unit(s)" that have approved this Agreement and adopted same in manner as provided by law and are hereafter listed at the end of this Agreement.

WHEREAS, Indiana law provides for Interlocal Cooperation at IC 36-1-7-1 et seq, and provides that any power or powers, privileges or authority exercised or which may be exercised by a unit of local government may be exercised and enjoyed jointly with any other local government including a unit of government from another state; and,

WHEREAS, Indiana Code IC 36-1-7-1 and IC 36-1-7-2(b) of the Intergovernmental Cooperation act, provides that any one or more public agencies may contract with any one or more public agencies to perform any governmental service, activity or undertaking which any of the public agencies entering into the contract is authorized by law to perform, provided that such contract shall be authorized by the governing body of each party to the contract; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Highland is a unit of local government as defined in Section 36-1-2-23 of the Indiana Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the parties hereto have determined that it is in their best interests to enter into this Agreement to secure to each the benefits of mutual aid in fire protection, firefighting and the protection of life and property from an emergency or disaster; and,

WHEREAS, the parties hereto have determined that it is in their best interests to form an association to provide for communications procedures, training and other necessary functions to further the provision of said protection of life and property from an emergency or disaster.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing recitals, the Unit's membership in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System and the covenants contained herein, THE PARTIES HERETO AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION ONE

Purpose

It is recognized and acknowledged that in certain situations, such as, but not limited to, emergencies, natural disasters and man-made catastrophes, the use of an individual Member Unit's personnel and equipment to perform functions outside the territorial limits of the Member Unit is desirable and necessary to preserve and protect the health, safety and welfare of the public. It is further expressly acknowledged that in certain situations, such as the aforementioned, the use of other Member Unit's personnel and equipment to perform functions within the territorial limits of a Member Unit is desirable and necessary to preserve and protect the health, safety and welfare of the public. Further, it is acknowledged that coordination of mutual aid through the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System is desirable for the effective and efficient provision of mutual aid.

SECTION TWO

Definitions

For the purpose of this Agreement, the following terms as used in this agreement shall be defined as follows:

- A. "Mutual Aid Box Alarm System" (hereinafter referred to as "MABAS"): A definite and prearranged plan whereby response and assistance is provided to a Stricken Unit by the Aiding Unit(s) in accordance with the system

established and maintained by the MABAS Member Units and amended from time to time;

- B. "Member Unit": A unit of local government including but not limited to a city, village or fire protection district having a fire department recognized by the State of Indiana, or a neighboring state, or an intergovernmental agency and the units of which the intergovernmental agency is comprised which is a party to the MABAS Agreement and has been appropriately authorized by the governing body to enter into such agreement, and to comply with the rules and regulations of MABAS;
- C. "Stricken Unit": A Member Unit which requests aid in the event of an emergency;
- D. "Aiding Unit": A Member Unit furnishing equipment, personnel, and/or services to a Stricken Unit;
- E. "Emergency": An occurrence or condition in a Member Unit's territorial jurisdiction which results in a situation of such magnitude and/or consequence that it cannot be adequately handled by the Stricken Unit and such that a Member Unit determines the necessity and advisability of requesting aid.
- F. "Division": The geographically associated Member Units or unit which have been grouped for operational efficiency and representation of those Member Units.
- G. "Training": The regular scheduled practice of emergency procedures during non-emergency drills to implement the necessary joint operations of MABAS.

- H. "Executive Board": The governing body of MABAS comprised of Division representatives.

SECTION THREE

Authority and Action to Effect Mutual Aid

- A. The Member Units hereby authorize and direct their respective Fire Chief or his designee to take necessary and proper action to render and/or request mutual aid from the other Member Units in accordance with the policies and procedures established and maintained by the MABAS Member Units. The aid rendered shall be to the extent of available personnel and equipment not required for adequate protection of the territorial limits of the Aiding Unit. The judgment of the Fire Chief, or his designee, of the Aiding Unit shall be final as to the personnel and equipment available to render aid.
- B. Whenever an emergency occurs and conditions are such that the Fire Chief, or his designee, of the Stricken Unit determines it advisable to request aid pursuant to this Agreement he shall notify the Aiding Unit of the nature and location of the emergency and the type and amount of equipment and personnel and/or services requested from the Aiding Unit.
- C. The Fire Chief, or his designee, of the Aiding Unit shall take the following action immediately upon being requested for aid:
1. Determine what equipment, personnel and/or services is requested according to the system maintained by MABAS;
 2. Determine if the requested equipment, personnel, and/or services can be committed in response to the request from the Stricken Unit;

3. Dispatch immediately the requested equipment, personnel and/or services, to the extent available, to the location of the emergency reported by the Stricken Unit in accordance with the procedures of MABAS;
4. Notify the Stricken Unit if any or all of the requested equipment, personnel and/or services cannot be provided.

SECTION FOUR

Jurisdiction Over Personnel and Equipment

Personnel dispatched to aid a party pursuant to this Agreement shall remain employees of the Aiding Unit. Personnel rendering aid shall report for direction and assignment at the scene of the emergency to the Fire Chief or Senior Officer of the Stricken Unit. The party rendering aid shall at all times have the right to withdraw any and all aid upon the order of its Fire Chief or his designee; provided, however, that the party withdrawing such aid shall notify the Fire Chief or Senior Officer of the party requesting aid of the withdrawal of such aid and the extent of such withdrawal.

SECTION FIVE

Compensation for Aid

Equipment, personnel, and/or services provided pursuant to this Agreement shall be at no charge to the party requesting aid; however, any expenses recoverable from third parties shall be equitably distributed among responding parties. Nothing herein shall operate to bar any recovery of funds from any state or federal agency under any existing statutes.

SECTION SIX

Insurance

Each party hereto shall procure and maintain, at its sole and exclusive expense, insurance coverage, including: comprehensive liability, personal injury, property damage, worker's compensation, and, if applicable, emergency medical service professional liability, with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 auto and \$1,000,000 combined single limit general liability and professional liability. No party hereto shall have any obligation to provide or extend insurance coverage for any of the items enumerated herein to any other party hereto or its personnel. The obligations of the Section may be satisfied by a party's membership in a self-insurance pool, a self-insurance plan or arrangement with an insurance provider approved by the state of jurisdiction. The MABAS may require that copies or other evidence of compliance with the provisions of this Section be provided to the MABAS. Upon request, Member Units shall provide such evidence as herein provided to the MABAS members.

SECTION SEVEN

Indemnification

Each party hereto agrees to waive all claims against all other parties hereto for any loss, damage, personal injury or death occurring in consequence of the performance of this Mutual Aid Agreement; provided, however, that such claim is not a result of gross negligence or willful misconduct by a party hereto or its personnel.

Each party requesting or providing aid pursuant to this Agreement hereby expressly agrees to hold harmless, indemnify and defend the party rendering aid and its personnel from any and all claims, demands, liability, losses, suits in law or in equity which are made by a third party. This indemnity shall include attorney fees and costs that may arise from providing aid pursuant to this Agreement. Provided, however, that all employee benefits, wage and disability payments, pensions, worker's compensation claims, damage to or destruction of equipment and clothing, and medical expenses of the party rendering aid shall be the sole and exclusive responsibility of the respective party for its employees, provided, however, that such claims made by a third party are not the result of gross negligence or willful misconduct on the part of the party rendering aid.

Provided further, that the obligation to defend and indemnify shall not be require any member to provide defense or indemnification beyond the statutory and constitutional limits of liability that are set forth in any applicable law in the State in which the member is located, and nothing in this Agreement is meant to constitute a waiver of any immunity or defense available to the member under the laws of the State in which the member is located.

SECTION EIGHT

Non-Liability for Failure to Render Aid

The rendering of assistance under the terms of this Agreement shall not be mandatory if local conditions of the Aiding Unit prohibit response. It is the responsibility of the Aiding Unit to immediately notify the Stricken Unit of the Aiding Unit's inability to respond; however, failure to immediately notify the Stricken Unit of such inability to respond shall not constitute evidence of noncompliance with the terms of this section and no liability may be assigned.

No liability of any kind or nature shall be attributed to or be assumed, whether expressly or implied, by a party hereto, its duly authorized agents and personnel, for failure or refusal to render aid. Nor shall there be any liability of a party for withdrawal of aid once provided pursuant to the terms of this Agreement.

SECTION NINE

Term

This Agreement shall be in effect for a term of one year from the date of signature hereof and shall automatically renew for successive one year terms unless terminated in accordance with this Section.

Any party hereto may terminate its participation in this Agreement at any time, provided that the party wishing to terminate its participation in this Agreement shall give written notice to the Board of their Division and to the Executive Board specifying the date of termination, such notice to be given at least 90 calendar days prior to the specified date of termination of participation. The written notice provided herein shall be given by personal delivery, registered mail or certified mail.

SECTION TEN

Effectiveness

This Agreement shall be in full force and effective upon approval by the parties hereto in the manner provided by law and upon proper execution hereof.

SECTION ELEVEN

Binding Effect

This Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of any successor entity which may assume the obligations of any party hereto. Provided, however, that this Agreement may not be assigned by a Member Unit without prior written consent of the parties hereto; and this Agreement shall not be assigned by MABAS without prior written consent of the parties hereto.

SECTION TWELVE

Validity

The invalidity of any provision of this Agreement shall not render invalid any other provision. If, for any reason, any provision of this Agreement is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unenforceable, that provision shall be deemed severable and this Agreement may be enforced with that provision severed or modified by court order.

SECTION THIRTEEN

Notices

All notices hereunder shall be in writing and shall be served personally, by registered mail or certified mail to the parties at such addresses as may be designated from time to time on the MABAS mailing lists or, to other such addresses as shall be agreed upon.

SECTION FOURTEEN

Governing Law

This Agreement shall be governed, interpreted and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Indiana.

SECTION FIFTEEN

Execution in Counterparts

This Agreement may be executed in multiple counterparts or duplicate originals, each of which shall constitute and be deemed as one and the same document.

SECTION SIXTEEN

Executive Board of MABAS

An Executive Board is hereby established to consider, adopt and amend from time to time as needed rules, procedures, by-laws and any other matters deemed necessary by the Member Units. The Executive Board shall consist of a member elected from each Division within MABAS who shall serve as the voting representative of said Division on MABAS matters, and may appoint a designee to serve temporarily in his stead. Such designee shall be from within the respective division and shall have all rights and privileges attendant to a representative of that Member Unit.

A President and Vice President shall be elected from the representatives of the Member Units and shall serve without compensation. The President and such other officers as are provided for in the by-laws shall coordinate the activities of the MABAS.

SECTION SEVENTEEN

Duties of the Executive Board

The Executive Board shall meet regularly to conduct business and to consider and publish the rules, procedures and by laws of the MABAS, which shall govern the Executive Board meetings and such other relevant matters as the Executive Board shall deem necessary.

SECTION EIGHTEEN

Rules and Procedures

Rules, procedures and by laws of the MABAS shall be established by the Member Units via the Executive Board as deemed necessary from time to time for the purpose of administrative functions, the exchange of information and the common welfare of the MABAS.

SECTION NINETEEN

Amendments

This Agreement may only be amended by written consent of all the parties hereto. This shall not preclude the amendment of rules, procedures and by laws of the MABAS as established by the Executive Board to this Agreement. The undersigned unit of local government or public agency hereby has adopted, and subscribes to, and approves this MUTUAL AID BOX ALARM SYSTEM Agreement to which this signature page will be attached, and agrees to be a party thereto and be bound by the terms thereof.

This Signatory certifies that this Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement has been adopted and approved by ordinance, resolution, or other manner approved by law, a copy of which document is attached hereto.

Town of Highland
Political Entity

President, Town Council of Highland

Date

ATTEST:

Highland Clerk-Treasurer
Title

August 12, 2024
Date

- x. **Discussion:** Update from attorney Reed on the status of disposing of the USAR Trailer and the wood shoring trailer parked in the south fire station and purchased with FEMA funds. Fire Department to remove any tools of value to Highland.

Attorney Reed said he has the resolution completed which is basically the same that was used for Engine 8. He said he didn't have VIN numbers or great descriptions so he attached pictures of both he received from Chief Pipta and labelled them as exhibits.

Councilor Scheeringa advised the Clerk-Treasurer to place the resolution on the August 12th plenary meeting agenda.

- x. **Discussion:** Authorizing the proper officer to publish legal notice of a public hearing: Public Hearing to consider additional appropriations in the amount of \$22,741 in the Police Pension Fund, \$88,500 in the Local Road & Street Fund and \$105,000 in the Redevelopment General Fund.

The Clerk-Treasurer explained to the Council the need for the additional appropriations and advised if approved, the public hearing would be August 26th.

The Council President advised the Clerk-Treasurer to place the item on the August 12th plenary meeting agenda.

- x. **Discussion:** Review proposal D from the Idea Factory for redesigning/reworking the Town of Highland website – highland.in.gov.

\$5,000 level:

Home page slider images, home page icons, social media integration throughout, new color palette

\$7,500 level:

All of the above level, plus
Calendar widget, calendar training, initial calendar entries

\$10,000 level:

All of the above level, plus
In-person department head and staff meetings to rework content and visuals.
Includes custom content, design and photography

\$15,000 level:

All of the above level, plus
Explore Downtown Highland Business widget and listings
Real Estate widget and listings
Document Center Widget

Councilor Robertson began by distributing a rough draft of a job description for a social media manager. He said it is in pretty rough stage but asked the Council to take a look at it and to discuss at the August 5th study session. He envisions the position to be an independent contractor. He said it would be advantageous for the Town to get someone in house or at arm's reach and that all of the Town's digital media would be funneled through that person. He said currently, it seems every board or commission has its own page which is in addition to the Town's page. And people get on boards or commissions, it seem they create their own. It is a digital chaos out there. He thought it would be good to have this digital manager to reel everything in and boost our presence and engagement in the community and on-line. Someone who can hit the ground running. This person would be the contact person for all departments. They would be a cohesive voice for the entire Town. He was asked if this person would also manage and maintain the Town's website. He responded that it is a possibility. It depends on what level the Council chooses from the Idea Factory's proposal D. He said you could have the Idea Factory continue to manage and maintain the website and then turn it over to the media manager.

The general consensus of the Council was that the media manager wouldn't be capable of redoing the website and let the Idea Factory do it but periodically have media manager go in there an update and adding things. It would be awful difficult to have one person wear all these different hats and have all those skills.

IT Director Ed Dabrowski commented that he researched what was proprietary to the Idea Factory and what belonged to the Town. He said the Town owns the web content. It belongs to the Town but was developed by the Idea Factory. As it stands, the Town would have to continue to hire the Idea Factory to host the website or some other party or the website would become stagnant. Each builder of websites use their particular language. If the Town were to change hosts, the new host would have their own language. He said ideally, if you have a media manager who is familiar with the language that the Idea Factory uses, maybe we could strike a deal with the Idea Factory to utilize their site and have the media manager make changes. He added that the only proprietary data that the Idea Factory owns is that they copyrighted the name Gazebo express. Theresa from the Idea Factory agreed. She said the Town could use others to write the content of the newsletter but it could not be called the Gazebo Express. Another name would have to be used. could design the content of the newsletter

Theresa Badovich, a principle in the Idea Factory said the Idea Factory would honor the agreement with the Town and continue to do the newsletter but if the Town decides to bring the newsletter in house, then the Town would have to change the newsletter's name. She said as far as the website goes, the State of Indiana owns the domain. She reiterated that Proposal D, which the Council has before them, is to redesign/rework the website. She said they had proposed several prototypes to freshen it up, to make it livelier. She said one of the proposals is to meet with all of the department heads and to freshen up all their content. Even if, the Council decides to go in a different direction, as least the contents is updated and good to go. She said when they took over, we couldn't use the existing design or language but had to develop their own design and language. They had to go to the old website and down load everything off of it which took a lot of time. She said, they then archived everything. She said your new media manager would have to do the same thing but they would have accessibility to everything.

Ed said if you brought it in house, the Town would have to host it. He said you wouldn't want to have a dedicated server in house but you would definitely want to keep it out in the world. The server is the vessel that points the public to the domain.

Theresa said that they touch the website on a daily basis. They are always talking with the department heads, which is one of the reasons they created the web updates email. She said they receive the Town calendar and make sure it get up on the Town's website. The HCCE may send them information about an upcoming event and have a link to a form or a flyer.

Councilor Scheeringa asked Councilor Robertson to clarify. Was Councilor Robertson saying that the Idea Factory would continue to do the Gazebo Express but the Digital

Media Manager would have access to it and put the Gazebo on the Town's Facebook page?

Councilor Robertson said that is one option or we could have digital medial manager take over the activity of the newsletter and have them design something new and keep it all in house. This person would go out and take pictures and get content and get it out on our social media.

Councilor Scheeringa said he likes the idea of having a person in house who would have real time access to our website. They can be an in-house person or a contractor. It really doesn't matter, its whatever flavor the Council desires. The Council will have to decide which direction it wants to go?

Councilor Robertson said if it is going to be a full-time gig, then that person should be responsible for the Gazebo Express and other items the Idea Factory is currently fulfilling. If you went with a contractor, who would be responsible for digital content and on-line presence across different platforms, there would be a lot of savings because you won't have to pay them benefits. You are basically saying, we expect you to do x, y & z. They are real and the person the different boards and commissions go through them with their content and then feeding it out. He said we really need to create a policy, that prohibits or reels in the various boards and commissions from each member creating their own Facebook page. It is really getting out of control. You need to have one voice to respond to posts. In the proposal, our medial manager will respond 1 to 3 times a day. If you don't respond to a post, that post becomes law and the person making the post becomes an expert.

Theresa said there is not a whole lot happening on the Highland page except posting agendas and meeting minutes. She said there are a lot of questions out there and people are getting bad information off of Facebook. She said in our proposal, we would be doing the same thing as your proposed digital medial manager. They would push the gazebo express out to those who aren't currently receiving it. The hard part is corralling all of them into one. She said the gazebo was used initially to be the Council's voice and to set the record straight. And remember, social media was not as a big deal then as it is now.

Councilor Scheeringa asked the Council to take a look at Proposal D and the four (4) levels of what the Idea Factory is proposing and what are the Council's thoughts. He reminded the Council that we have discussed at length at a bunch of meetings.

Theresa said the \$5,000 level is to make the website livelier with photo slider icons. The \$7,500 level includes everything from the \$5,000 level but would weave social media throughout the site. It is social integration where links are established from the website to the Town's Facebook page or the police department's page. A simple click on the link and the person is taken to that page. It is even more interactive, even with portals. She said they would train people to use the portal. The \$10,000 level would have the Idea Factory meeting with each of the department heads and review and create new content. They would take pictures and make it more robust.

Councilor Scheeringa said he said the website needs a complete overhaul and he favors either the \$7,500 or \$10,000 level but at least the \$7,500 level. We can determine which level when we decide what we are going to do with the digital media manager.

Council Turich said he would like to see more blue and yellow because when he types in Highland, there's a million of them. He agrees with revamping the website but once revamped, who carries the torch from this point forward so it doesn't become stagnant again?

Theresa said that once the content is updated, even if the Town chose to go into another direction, the content is updated and done. She said they would train but aren't letting anyone past the secure walls of the website. In answer to Councilor Turich question, the Idea Factory could do it but at a cost.

Councilor Scheeringa asked Councilor Robertson what level he would recommend?

Councilor Robertson said he would recommend the \$10,000 level because the website is fully revamped with all new content and if we go with a media digital manager or whatever we call it, they will be able to maintain the website. We give them the content and they update the website.

Ed Dabrowski said that all of the social media sites are kind of on a horizontal plane, all independently run. That's because that's the way they were developed. He envisions more of a hierarchy system. All the other would be under the Town's page and the Town Council officially sanctions the various other page through the social media manager. However, those who currently have responsibility over their web pages would continue to maintain it. He reminded the Council that social media is not federally regulated. If someone wants to post that they are the Highland Public Works Director and post false or misleading information, they can do so. He also suggested the use of an app, like the apps on your phone. Griffith developed an app. It might worth to look into. Maybe like a town app that people can download. If the resident has a problem, they use the app to notify the Town.

Councilor Scheeringa concluded the discussion by saying there is a lot of information to digest and we can't make a formal decision tonight. We have study session next Monday. Take the information tonight, hash it around and come back with questions

next

Monday.

Town of Highland, Indiana

Overview:

The Town of Highland is soliciting proposals from qualified firms or individuals to provide digital media management services. The selected vendor will be responsible for enhancing the town's online presence through strategic content creation and management across various social media platforms.

Scope of Work:

1. Social Media Management:

- Develop and implement a content strategy for the Town of Highland Facebook page and other relevant social media accounts.
- Ensure regular updates with a minimum of 1 post per week and a maximum of 3 posts per week per platform.
- Monitor social media channels and engage with followers as needed.


2. Content Creation:

- Create engaging text, image, and video content tailored to the town's initiatives, events, and announcements.
- Coordinate with town departments and boards to gather content and ensure accuracy.

3. Gazebo Express Newsletter:

- Design and populate content for a regular newsletter or bulletin (Gazebo Express) to be shared on social media platforms.
- Include updates, announcements, and other relevant town information.

4. Coordination and Reporting:

		THERESA BADOVICH theresa@theideafactory.us.com 219.669.8312
	ONE COURTHOUSE SQUARE SUITE 207 CROWN POINT, IN 46307	ROBIN CARLASCIO robin@theideafactory.us.com 219.831.0634

To:
Highland Clerk-Treasurer Mark Herak
Highland IT Director Ed Dabrowski
Highland Town Council

From: The Idea Factory

Subject: 2024 Contract - **Proposal D**
Redesigning/reworking Town of Highland website - highland.in.gov

Option levels for website redesign:

\$5,000 level includes:

Home page slider images	Social Media Integration throughout
Home page icons	New color palette throughout

\$7,500 level includes:

All of the above, plus	
Calendar widget	Initial Calendar Entries
Calendar Training	

\$10,000 level includes:

All of the above, plus
In-person department head and staff meetings to rework content and visuals.
Includes custom content, design and photography.

\$15,000 level includes:

All of the above, plus
Explore Downtown Highland Business widget and listings
Real Estate widget and listings
Document Center widget

x. **Discussion:** Review the 2024 financials from the 4th of the July Festival

The Clerk-Treasurer had placed the 2024 financials from the 4th of July Festival in the Council's meeting packet. He explained to the Council that he also included a column of the 2023 financials. He explained that in 2023, the amusement ride operator and beer vendor took their proceeds and the Town only recorded its proceeds. In 2024, all proceeds were recorded and proceeds and the distribution to the amusement ride operator and beer vendor were recorded as expenses. We did it this way so if someone asked what were the proceeds from the rides or beer garden, we could easily give the gross number. It makes it a lot cleaner. He then went over each line with the Council. The net profit was \$63,294. At the bottom, he listed the expenses incurred by the police, fire, parks and public works. Those expenses are borne by the individual departments budgets. He listed them because there was talk about having those expenses borne out of the proceeds by the HCCE. Finally, he made the Council aware that the HCCE had requested revenue thus far this year. He said he had no problem giving it but no other board or commission makes that request and the HCCE should not concern themselves with revenues to date, as revenues are used as seed money for next year. The HCCE should be concerned about managing their 2024 budget as they have roughly \$25,000 to carry them to the end of the year and they have the BBQ fest, trunk or treat and Santa's march yet to come. He pointed out to the Council, that currently in cash for the HCCE is \$165,000. It is non-reverting in the sense the money doesn't return to the general fund at the end of the year but remains in the HCCE Fund. At the same time, the adopted budget gives the HCCE to spend. The \$165,000 is in cash and is controlled by the Council. If the HCCE wanted to spend that money, they would have to get permission from the Council to spend in the form of an additional appropriation. He also pointed out that the HCCE doesn't have a levy or receive property tax, Their budget is based upon the cash balance at the end of the year so any additional appropriations should be carefully thought through.

Councilor Robertson informed the Council that more electrical work is needed, for example broken outlets that were run over by kids on their bikes and some outlets we're not labelled properly. He was saying that he was pulling off labels and putting them on the correct breaker. He mentioned his daughter took a spill after hitting one of those outlets while she was on her bike.

Memorandum of Meeting
Monday, July 29 2024

2024 Highland 4th of July Net Profit Summary	2024	2023
Revenues		
Ride/Concessions	\$190,384.75	\$58,229.89
Art/Crafts Booth	\$5,465.61	\$4,435.00
Food Booths	\$17,646.75	\$15,575.00
Parade	\$1,920.00	\$1,598.28
Beverage Services	\$112,338.25	\$82,377.48
Sponsorship	\$13,930.00	\$7,500.00
Total Revenues	\$341,685.36	\$169,715.65
Expenses		
Misc. Supplies	\$875.25	\$392.09
Printing & Promotion	\$1,231.96	\$225.00
Event Insurance	\$3,087.00	\$3,613.00
Sanitation	\$5,891.00	\$5,715.00
Sales Tax	\$9,453.67	\$11,322.43
Parade	\$664.84	\$958.12
Permits	\$380.62	\$297.15
Fireworks	\$34,500.00	\$25,000.00
Sound System	\$6,900.00	\$6,000.00
Entertainment	\$35,100.00	\$23,625.00
Beverage Services	\$50,769.45	\$41,271.73
Public Relations/Donations	\$9,750.00	\$14,600.00
Amusement /Game Services	\$115,527.10	
Electric Work	\$4,260.00	
Total Expenses	\$278,390.89	\$133,019.52
Net Profit	\$63,294.47	\$36,696.13
Departmental Costs		
Police Department (see JB email)	\$25,214.30	
Fire Department (see DB email)	\$1,190.70	
Park Department (see AB email)	\$10,024	
Public Works (see KW email)	\$4,319	
Total Departmental Costs (approximate)	\$40,748.00	

x. **Discussion:** Continuing discussion on the goals & objectives of the Department Heads

Councilor Turich began by reading his Top 5 Goals that he'd like to see accomplished.

Mark Herak

From: Doug Turich <doug.turich@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 14, 2024 11:54 PM
To: Mark Herak
Cc: jpratlaw@aol.com; Phil Scheeringa
Subject: Top 5 Goals - Doug Turich

Mark,

Good evening! I am on vacation and I won't be able to attend tomorrow's meeting. Could you please present my top 5 goals as discussed in previous meetings:

1. Gain alignment with the other members of the council on a vision for Highland's future
 - > Develop a strategic plan
 - > Foster collaboration and solicit feedback from the community.
 - > Establish transparent, clear and measurable goals for growth
 - > Regularly review progress
2. Improve our parks
 - > Increase the appeal and add amenities that attract a broad range of ages to ensure the parks are enjoyed by the entire community.
3. Revitalize our downtown
 - > Foster a sense of community in the downtown area by hosting events, festivals and other activities.
 - > Support small businesses as they are the lifeblood of the downtown area
 - > Work to maintain the character and charm of the downtown area
4. Attract new business
 - > Emphasize the appeal of a well-maintained and inviting downtown area
 - > Highlight the opportunity to take advantage of improved public spaces for outdoor seating and events.
 - > Emphasize the benefits of being part of a vibrant and engaged community
 - > Streamline the process to make it easier for a business to establish themselves in the community.

5. Establish clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and metrics for town hall meetings, ensuring effectiveness, engagement, and continuous improvement in communication and transparency.
- Define KPIs: Identify and define the key metrics that will gauge the success and impact
 - Develop Measurement Framework: Create a structured framework for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on the identified KPIs
 - Implement Tracking Mechanisms: Integrate tools or systems to effectively track and monitor the defined KPIs in real-time or post-event, ensuring accurate measurement and data-driven decision-making.
 - Establish Baselines and Targets: Set initial benchmarks (baselines) for each KPI and establish realistic targets for improvement based on historical data and organizational objectives.
 - Continuous Improvement: Regularly review and evaluate the effectiveness of the KPIs and metrics framework, making adjustments as necessary to enhance the impact and relevance
 - Communicate Results and Insights: Share insights and outcomes derived from the KPIs with stakeholders to foster transparency and accountability.

Thanks,

Doug

Councilor Turich commented that he provided his list of items but the idea was that all the Council would supply ideas and that would be our discussion points.

Councilor Scheeringa said to Councilor Turich that we discussed your points two (2) weeks ago and the Council agreed that a lot of our ideas aligned with those on your list. It seems like a lot of these, we are already doing. He said, the RFP has been released for the Comprehensive Plan. That will include input from the public.

Councilor Turich asked the Clerk-Treasurer when would the Council start working on the budget. He was advised that work has begun. Councilor Turich turned to Councilor Georgeff and said that he referenced the time line for the comprehensive plan. He said if we start now, we're one year out from that plan, we'll miss 2025 and into 2026. If we wait for the Comprehensive Plan, we will have one year left in our term to drive some change. The purpose of his ideas is to work parallel with the comprehensive plan.

Councilor Scheeringa said we are already doing that. We're looking at the fence around Main Square. That is something that you have on your list, improving the parks. You mentioned improving the downtown, which is being done. We've been discussing the lighting.

Councilor Turich said he agreed that there has been a lot of discussions but the challenge is to start to assign some milestones with dates.

Councilor Georgeff said we have the architect coming to town next month to gather data on the expansion of the fire station and new town hall. He is going to provide some cost estimates. He said next month there is a public hearing scheduled on the sign ordinance. The change will help one of the businesses downtown. He said we're negotiating on a new building to house the new animal control center. He added in the master plan, it makes a recommendation what to do with the old ultra food site and we've talked about putting LaPorte Street through.

Councilor Scheeringa said a lot of this stuff is moving forward but before we jump the gun a big portion of the master plan is to develop a capital plan. It all comes down to dollars and cents which makes the capital plan critical. In the creation of the master plan, you are getting input from the department heads and the public. In 2021, the Park Department redid their master plan. He reminded Councilor Turich that it takes longer with government to get things done as compared to the private sector which Councilor Turich is familiar with. Making things more difficult is that our plenary meetings are every other week. When it comes to projects, the Town is required to use a bidding process. He said he feels its important to speak as one voice so everyone is on the same page which the master plan will accomplish as opposed to each having their own set of plans and everyone is going in all sorts of different directions. We can take that master plan and narrow it down saying what we want to accomplish in year 1, year 2 and so on.

Councilor Turich said the master plan is looking at it strategically instead of technically. With his list, he is looking for vision and change and drive. We have all these vertical or

silos, we need to give direction so the vision cascades down into these silos. As a Town, we need to be driving for a common goal.

Councilor Scheeringa re-emphasized the need for a capital plan. You need to know the costs and then prioritize based upon cost. I may want this project and you want that project and based upon cost, we prioritize a totally different project.

Councilor Turich said he hates to use this term but are we going to sit on our hands until this strategic plan is developed?

Councilor Black said we are already doing things and not waiting till the strategic plan is developed. We have an architect looking to expand the fire station and build a new town hall. We're looking at installing lights downtown and a fence around Main Square.

Councilor Turich said we are into our seventh month and we are just now engaging in a contract with an engineer for the fencing around Main Square. How soon do you think it will be before we have an engineering plan so that we can then go out and quote the project and get firm numbers? We need a firm number before we can decide to go forward or not.

Councilor Scheeringa said we should have a plan within a month and firm costs within a couple of months.

Councilor Georgeff said depending upon interests, we may be able to refinance some existing bonds and do the projects we talked about and not increase the cost to our taxpayers.

Councilor Turich asked Councilor Scheeringa to expand upon the negotiations with the developer regarding the old town theater site and south Kennedy Avenue. Councilor Scheeringa said it is still be negotiated. Councilor Turich said he is going to bite his tongue on that project but you can't call it a success. We are seven months into our term and we have nothing to show for it.

The Clerk-Treasurer said the Council might want to look at and talk about efficiencies. With rising costs, how are we going to reduce costs and still provide great service our residents have come to expect. How do we work smarter?

Councilor Turich asked Councilor Scheeringa a hypothetical question. A resident approached you and says, you've been in office seven months, what is your biggest success or accomplishment? What would you tell them? What are your top three(3)?

Councilor Scheeringa said he would tell them that we are in the process of establishing a master plan, the last one is over twenty (20) years old. To me, that is huge.

Councilor Turich said he agreed but before we can act upon that plan, we are already into year three (3), ready to start year four (4). We're not gaining ground. We still nothing for Ultra or the old Town Theater property.

Councilor Scheeringa agreed that they are still vacant properties and nobodies committed to move forward but the property is owned by a private landowner and there is nothing we can do to force them. We have been having good conversations with them. Everything takes times but we are moving forward with the downtown lighting and the fence around Main Square. We had to adjust the RFP for the downtown lighting.

Councilor Turich said we spend a lot of time conversing before a decision is made.

Councilor Scheeringa said you are liaison to the Park Board. The fence around Main Square was your baby. You should have been working on it since day one (1).

Councilor Scheeringa said a big success for him was to work with the fire chief to help build morale, we've adjusted the budget to get all the new equipment for the new truck. The fire department hasn't had new equipment in years. He then asked Chief Potesta how many new officers have the Town hired?

Chief Potesta said seven (7) and added that we are finally at full staff.

Councilor Turich asked Councilor Scheeringa, as a strategic leader, what was your role or how did you drive him or his team to allow them to hire those seven (7) officers?

Councilor Scheeringa said we changed several policies, like changing the take home car policy or bridging service time. It made officers to want to come to Highland. Whereas we want long term successes we are also looking at short term successes as well. He said you have a lot of great stuff here Doug but its going to take several years to accomplish which is fine but we need to also look at short term successes.

Councilor Georgeff said take a look at the sign ordinance. We have been working on that since January and the public hearing is next month. It was frustrating because this was a project the Council wanted but because there was only one (1) item on the agenda, they cancelled the Plan Commission meeting.

Councilor Turich said he still didn't think the Town has good KPI'S or even KPI's. That is one of the reasons that I want the department heads to come in each plenary with a prepared list of successes. The department heads work very hard but it's not recorded but if they came to each plenary meeting with a scorecard, the meetings are recorded and the general public can review the meeting as it is easily accessible.

Councilor Scheeringa said isn't that what we are doing when we ask the department heads to give an update what is going on in their department?

Councilor Turich said he would like to see the reporting a little more standard, a little more metric driven or data driven. He said he has been working with Chief Pipta over the last several weeks on his reporting. He said he wished the other department heads would do the same. In order for us to start, we need to develop KPI's for each department. The KPI's would make each department more proactive versus reactive.

The discussion then turned to hiring a Town Manager, as the Council is acting like a Town Manager and at times, too many cooks in the kitchen. The problem they were faced with was the maximum length of the term of a contract would be to 2027. Would anyone want to leave their current employment for a two (2) year contract and are they willing to give up the hands on day to day. They decided to defer this conversation to a later date.

Another topic that was deferred to a later meeting was the staffing levels of the park department which is below national standards.

Councilor Scheeringa asked if there were any additional agenda items. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 8:42 p.m.