

**Enrolled Minutes of the Fifty-Fourth Regular Meeting or Special Meeting  
For the Thirtieth Highland Town Council Regular Plenary  
Business Meeting (In person) Monday, February 9, 2026**

The Thirtieth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met in its regular plenary session on Monday, February 9, 2026 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. Councilor Georgeff, Councilor Doug Turich, Councilor Alex Robertson, Councilor Tom Black and Councilor Philip Scheeringa all participated in person.

Pursuant to HMC Section 2.05.130(A)(2), the Town Council considered and reviewed the agenda in an informal proceeding in the plenary meeting room before the president called the meeting to order.

The Town Council President George Georgeff presided over the meeting. The Town Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak, was present to memorialize the proceedings. The meeting was opened with Councilor Doug Turich reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and offering a prayer.

**Roll Call:** Present on roll call were Councilors George Georgeff, Doug Turich, Alex Robertson, Thomas Black, Philip Scheeringa were present. Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak was also present. A quorum was attained.

**Additional Officials Present:** Tim Diamond, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation; Metropolitan Police Chief Ralph Potesta; Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra; Glenn Schlessler, Fire Chief; Ed Dabrowski, Director of Information Technology, Kenneth J. Mika, Building Commissioner, Mark Kneseck, Public Works Director and John Reed, Attorney with JPR Legal Services were present

*Guests:* Theresa Badovich (remotely) and Robin Carlascio (remotely) of the Idea Factory were also present.

**Minutes of the Previous Meetings:** The minutes of the January 26, 2026 Plenary meeting were approved by general consent.

**Special Orders:**

1. **Executive Proclamation:** A Proclamation of the Municipal Executive Finding and Determination that an Emergency Exists and Declaring a Local Disaster Emergency (January 25, 2026) in the Town of Highland.
  - (a) Reading and Execution of Proclamation.
  - (b) Action by the Town Council President

The Town Council President approved the proclamation by his signature:

THE TOWN of HIGHLAND  
PROCLAMATION of the MUNICIPAL EXECUTIVE NO. 2026-01

**FINDING AND DETERMINATION AN EMERGENCY EXISTS AND  
DECLARING A LOCAL DISASTER EMERGENCY**

**Whereas,** From time to time circumstances exist such that an emergency occurs that could not reasonably be foreseen and that threatens the public health, welfare, or safety and requires immediate action; and

**Whereas,** The Town of Highland experienced a severe winter snow storm event beginning on or about January 23, 2026 featuring significant snowfall, extreme cold temperatures, hazardous travel conditions in the Town; and

**Whereas,** The Governor of the State of Indiana has issued emergency declarations in consequence of a major storm event beginning on or about January 25, 2026 featuring life-threatening cold, increased demand on emergency services, significant snowfall potential utility outages and risks to the public; and

**Whereas,** As a result of the recent severe winter storm, it is imperative that emergency management, law enforcement, and other government officials be empowered with the authority to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the safety of the public is maintained; and

**Whereas,** Indiana Code 10-14-3-29 (a)(1) provides that a local disaster emergency may be declared by the principal executive officer of a political subdivision; and

**Whereas,** The Town of Highland, through its Town Council President, as the principal executive officer now desires to issue a finding and determination that an emergency exists sufficient to support the declaration of a *Local Disaster Emergency*, all pursuant to IC 10-14-3-29;

**Now Therefore pursuant to IC 10-14-3-29 be it hereby Proclaimed and declared** by the Town Council President of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana as follows:

**Section 1.** That pursuant to IC 10-14-3-29, there now exists a local disaster emergency in the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, requiring that measures be taken to address the snowfall weather emergency, including life-threatening cold and recover from the impacts of this winter storm. This local disaster emergency declaration shall remain in effect until the statewide disaster emergency has been terminated, not to exceed a period of sixty (60) days from the date of its entry;

**Section 2.** That this declaration shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly in the office of the Clerk-Treasurer of the Town of Highland;

**Section 3.** That the effect of this declaration of a local disaster emergency is to: (1) activate the response and recovery aspects of all applicable local or inter-jurisdictional disaster emergency plans; (2) authorize the furnishing of aid and assistance under the plans; and (3) recoup resources expended but not limited to the wages paid, lost revenue, gasoline or equipment used; and

**Section 4.** That the public health, welfare, or safety is in immediate danger such that requires the expenditure of money in the Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund, provided such expenditure shall be for purposes to protect the public health, welfare, or safety in this emergency situation that demands immediate action, all pursuant to Section 3.45.140 (B)(1) of the Municipal Code and IC 36-9-15.5-8(c).

**BE IT SO PROCLAIMED, DECLARED and ORDERED** pursuant to and under the authority of Highland Municipal Code Section 3.45.140 (B)(1) and IC 10-14-3-29. Entered this 26th day of January 2026 by the Town Council President of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana. Filed with the Clerk-Treasurer on 9<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026 at 6:30 o'clock p.m.

**TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

**By its Town Council President**

\_\_\_\_\_  
George Georgeff, President

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Herak, Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5)

**2. Consideration of Proposed Additional Appropriations:** (controlled And non-controlled funds): Proposed Additional Appropriations in Excess of the 2025 Budget for the Legacy Foundation Grant Fund in the amount of \$17,500.00.

- (a) Attorney verification of Proofs of Publication: Gateway**
  - (b) Public Hearing.**
  - (c) Action on Appropriation Enactment No. 2026-01:**  
An Enactment Appropriating Additional Moneys in Excess of the Annual Budget for the **Legacy Foundation Grant Fund**, all pursuant to I.C. 6-1.1-18, and I.C. 36-5-3-5

*\*requires 2 readings if the Council desires to pass it on the first night.*

The DLGF said the website is still not open and no new additional would be approved.

**3. Amend the Agenda:** To ratify the special Town Council Meeting held on Saturday, February 7, 2026, in the Community Room of the Police Station at 3315 Ridge Road to conduct interviews.

Councilor Black moved to amend the agenda and add the ratifying of the special Town Council Meeting held on Saturday, February 7, 2026, in the Community Room of the Police Station at 3315 Ridge Road, to conduct interviews of potential candidates. Councilor Robertson seconded. Upon a roll call vote, a unanimous vote being necessary, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The Agenda was amended.

Councilor Scheeringa moved to ratifying of the special Town Council Meeting held on Saturday, February 7, 2026, in the Community Room of the Police Station at 3315 Ridge Road, to conduct interview of potential candidates. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, a two-thirds vote being necessary, there were five (5) affirmatives and no (0) negatives. The meeting was ratified.

Comments from the Public or Visitors: None


Staff Reports: The following staff reports were received and filed.

Building Report January, 2026

| PERMIT TYPE                   | #         | Res.      | Comm.     | Est. Cost              | Fee Collected       |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Commercial Buildings          | 1         |           | 1         | \$ 1,500,000.00        | \$ 25,272.00        |
| Comm. Additions/Remodel       | 7         |           | 7         | \$ 159,580.00          | \$ 3,135.00         |
| Signs                         | 3         |           | 3         | \$ 11,632.00           | \$ 757.50           |
| Single Family                 | 0         |           |           | \$ -                   | \$ -                |
| Duplex/Condo                  | 0         |           |           | \$ -                   | \$ -                |
| Residential Additions         | 0         |           |           | \$ -                   | \$ -                |
| Residential Remodeling        | 30        | 30        |           | \$ 446,503.00          | \$ 9,400.50         |
| Concrete/Asphalt/Flatwork     | 1         | 1         |           | \$ 6,000.00            | \$ 136.50           |
| Garages                       | 0         |           |           | \$ -                   | \$ -                |
| Sheds                         | 0         |           |           | \$ -                   | \$ -                |
| Decks & Porches               | 1         | 1         |           | \$ 18,885.00           | \$ 549.00           |
| Fences                        | 2         | 2         |           | \$ 12,651.00           | \$ 414.00           |
| Above/In ground pools         | 0         |           |           | \$ -                   | \$ -                |
| Drain Tile/Waterproofing      | 4         | 4         |           | \$ 74,253.00           | \$ 1,674.00         |
| Misc: Demo (1); Road Cuts (9) | 10        | 9         | 1         | \$ -                   | \$ 1,488.25         |
| <b>Total Building Permits</b> | <b>59</b> | <b>47</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>\$ 2,229,504.00</b> | <b>\$ 42,826.75</b> |
|                               |           |           |           |                        |                     |
| <b>Electrical Permits</b>     | <b>6</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>\$ -</b>            | <b>\$ 1,988.00</b>  |
|                               |           |           |           |                        |                     |
| <b>Mechanical Permits</b>     | <b>17</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>3</b>  | <b>\$ -</b>            | <b>\$ 1,846.00</b>  |
|                               |           |           |           |                        |                     |
| Plumbing Permits              | 10        | 9         | 1         | \$ -                   | \$ 1,540.00         |
| Water Meters                  | 2         | 1         | 1         | \$ -                   | \$ 1,535.20         |
| Water taps                    | 1         |           | 1         | \$ -                   | \$ 330.00           |
| Sewer/Storm Taps              | 0         |           |           | \$ -                   | \$ -                |
| <b>Total Plumbing Permits</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>3</b>  | <b>\$ -</b>            | <b>\$ 3,405.20</b>  |

January 2026 Code Enforcement: 51 Investigations, 20 Warnings & No Citations were issued.  
 Inspections done for the month of January 2026 were as follows: 11 Building Inspections,  
 10 Plumbing Inspections, 12 HVAC and 10 Electrical Inspections. There were no Electrical Exam given.

Submitted By:



Kenneth J. Mika

**2026**  
 TOWN OF HIGHLAND INJURIES FOR THE MONTH  
**JANUARY**

| CASE | DATE OF INJURY | DEPARTMENT   | DESCRIPTION   | Record Only      | OSHA       | Not OSHA   | Filed with   |
|------|----------------|--------------|---|------------------|------------|------------|--------------|
|      |                |              |   | No Med Treatment | Recordable | Recordable | WC Insurance |
| RO1  | 1/11/2026      | Park         | EE slammed left finger in concession door while closing | X                |            | X          | X            |
| RO2  | 1/5/26         | Public Works | EE fell over open drawer                                | X                |            | X          | X            |
|      |                |              |   |                  |            |            |              |
|      |                |              |   |                  |            |            |              |

RO = Record Only

| DEPT          | 2026       |          | 2026                     |                |           |            |           |
|---------------|------------|----------|--------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
|               | INJURIES   | YEAR TO  | 2025                     | RESTRICTED     | LOST DAYS | RESTRICTED | LOST DAYS |
|               | THIS MONTH | DATE     | Total Injuries Last Year | DAYS THIS YEAR | THIS YEAR | DAYS 2025  | 2025      |
| PARK & REC    | 1          | 1        | 1                        |                |           |            | 7         |
| FIRE          |            |          |                          |                |           |            |           |
| POLICE        |            |          | 5                        |                |           | 0          | 29        |
| STREET        |            |          | 2                        |                |           |            | 4         |
| WATER SEWER   |            |          | 2                        |                |           |            |           |
| Public Works  | 1          | 1        |                          |                |           |            |           |
| REDV          |            |          |                          |                |           |            |           |
| BUILDING      |            |          | 1                        |                |           |            |           |
| <b>TOTALS</b> | <b>2</b>   | <b>2</b> | <b>11</b>                | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>   | <b>40</b> |

Effective January 1, 2002 OSHA changed the recordkeeping guidelines. We now count the number of days lost from the day after the injury until the employee returns to work. Weekends, holidays, vacation days or other days scheduled off are included in the lost days count to a maximum of 180 days

**Communications:**

Government Offices closed in honor of Presidents Day, February 16<sup>th</sup>  
 Garbage and Recycling will still be on Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
 All on-street parking is banned when there is more the 2 inches of snow

**Appointments:**

• **Statutory Boards and Commissions**

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

Regional Statutory Commissions or Boards

**Home Rule Boards and Commissions**

1. **Tree Board.** (2) Appointments to be nominated by the Town Council but appointed by the Town Council President. *(Note: Currently held by James Colias and Ron Jackowski, term ending 1<sup>st</sup> Monday January 2026). Term is for three (3) years Richard Underkofler; Blane Roberts)*
  - a. Nomination by the Town Council. *(The council would pass a motion to nominate.)*
  - b. Appointment by executive. *(If nominee is acceptable, the Town Council President may appoint.)*

Councilor Robertson moved the nomination to the Tree Board, seconded by Councilor Black of David Taylor, 9512 Hook Street, Highland and Teresa Lekan, 9347 Parkway Drive, Highland. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The persons indicated were formally nominated.

*Town Council President's Executive Action.* The Town Council President, as municipal executive, acknowledged the Town Council nominations and announced the appointment of **David Taylor**, 9512 Hook Street, Highland and Teresa Lekan, 9347 Parkway Drive, Highland. Terms are 3 years and until a successor is appointed and qualified, subject to the limitation in IC 36-1-15-10(d)(1). The Clerk-Treasurer noted he would prepare the proper communications of appointment.

**Legislative Appointments**

2. **Park and Recreation Board.** (2) appointments to be made by the Town Council. *(Note: Current appointee is Omar Torres (R), term ending 1<sup>st</sup> Monday January 2026) Term is for four (4) years. Nick Russo (D), term ending 1<sup>st</sup> Monday January 2027). (Current composition is 2 democrats and 2 republicans. Not more than 2 members may be of the same party.)*

Councilor Black moved to re-appoint **Omar Torres**, 2120 44<sup>th</sup> Street, Highland to the Park and Recreation Board. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. Mr. Torres was re-appointed.

Councilor Scheeringa moved to appoint **Matt Hanft**, 8434 Delaware Street, Highland to fill the unexpired term of Nick Russo on the Park and Recreation Board. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. Mr. Hanft was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Nick Russo which ends the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday, January of 2027.

- 3. Town Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners.** *(1) appointment to be made by the Town Council. (Note: Current appointee is Terry Krooswyk (D), term ending 1<sup>st</sup> Monday January 2026). Term is for three (3) years. (Current composition for these five citizen positions is three democrats and two republicans)*

*Action.* Councilor Turich moved the re-appointment **Terry Krooswyk (D)**, 3625 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Highland to a three-year term on the Town Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners, subject to the limitation in IC 36-1-15-10(d)(1). Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. Terry Krooswyk was re-appointed to the Town Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners as indicated. The Clerk-Treasurer noted he would prepare the required certification of appointment as required in the statute.

Regional Statutory Commissions or Boards

#### **Home Rule Commissions**

- 4. Main Street Bureau Board:** (17) appointments to be made by the Town Council. Term: Two years ending 1 Jan 2027. *Currently only 8 of 17 appointed.*

#### **General Orders and Unfinished Business:**

1. Proposed Ordinance No. 1837: An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 3.21, of the Compensation, Benefits and Personnel Program of the Municipality to be known as the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance commonly known as the Employees Handbook, entitled Promotions, pursuant to IC36-1-3 and other relevant statutes.

*\*requires 2 readings if the Council desires to pass it on the first night of introduction.*

Councilor Black introduced and moved for the consideration of Proposed Ordinance No. 1837 at the same meeting of its introduction. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, a unanimous vote being necessary, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The enactment could be considered at the same meeting of its introduction.

Councilor Robertson moved for the passage adoption of Ordinance No. 1837 at the same meeting of its introduction. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, a two-thirds vote being necessary, there were five (5) affirmatives and no (0) negatives. The motion passed. The enactment was passed and adopted upon the signature of the municipal executive at the same meeting of its introduction.

**ORDINANCE NO. 1837  
OF THE  
TOWN OF HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND PERSONNEL PROGRAM OF THE MUNICIPALITY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS ORDINANCE COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE EMPLOYEES HANDBOOK, PURSUANT TO IC 36-1-3 AND OTHER RELEVANT STATUTES.

WHEREAS, The Town Council is the fiscal and legislative body of the Town of Highland;

WHEREAS, IC 36-1-3-2 confers upon all local units the powers that they need for the effective operation of government as to local affairs;

WHEREAS, IC 36-1-3-6 (b)(1) prescribes that any such exercise of power shall be authorized through enactment of an ordinance passed by the legislative body; and

WHEREAS, IC 36-1-4, section 14 provides in pertinent part for the establishment of a system of employment for any class of employee; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council has determined that certain modifications to the program for compensation, benefits and personnel management for its public workforce, consistent with Indiana Statutes, would be of benefit to support and carryout the public purposes of the municipality;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED BY the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, as follows:

**Section 1.** That *Section 3.21* of the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance Commonly Known as the Municipal Employees Handbook be repealed in its entirety, and replaced with the following:

### § 3.21 Promotions

**§ 3.21 Promotions:** Promotions are based on the belief that it is in the best interest of all of us to have the most qualified person assigned to every job. All promotions shall be made with the clear and unwavering intent to prioritize the Town's current employees. It is the Town's policy that ALL vacancies will first be posted internally and filled by current, qualified employees who deserve such promotions. Only in the event that no internal candidates meet the minimum qualifications or demonstrate sufficient suitability for the role, as determined by the Town Council, or in the event of an emergency, as determined by the Department Manager and the Town Council, for certain jobs, may the position be opened to external applicants. ALL positions will be posted on the Towns and the particular departments bulletin board(s) for five (5) workdays prior to advertising for potential outside employees. In addition, internal candidates shall be interviewed and assessed prior to interviewing and assessing outside potential employees, and said potential outside employees shall not be interviewed or

assessed if internal employees are qualified and acceptable for the position(s). While the governing board of the Town or a particular department (as the case may be) can conduct a search outside of the Town based upon the parameters as so stated above, qualified Town employees shall be interviewed first and given priority over all others. If current employees of the Town want to be considered for the position, they may notify their supervisor. Promotions will be made on the basis of factors such as job performance, efficiency, training, knowledge, job qualifications, skills, ability and the supervisors' evaluation of the employees' potential abilities. To be eligible for promotion, an employee must meet minimum requirements of the higher-level position and must have a current satisfactory performance rating in the present position. Final decisions about whether to promote a current employee or to hire someone outside the organization resides with the Department Manager, under the provisions so stated above, and, for certain positions, the governing board of the Town.

A six (6) month trial period is required for internal promotions. After an employee accepts a promotion, the employee cannot return to the prior position unless the position is available. If the employees prior position is available, the employee may be returned to that position with the Department Manager's approval.

**Section 2.** That *Section 3.22* of the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance Commonly Known as the Municipal Employees Handbook be repealed in its entirety, and replaced with the following:

### **§3.22 Transfers**

**§3.22 Transfers:** It is our policy, where possible, to give employees the opportunity to transfer from one position to another and into different departments should they so desire and have the required skills and abilities. You may request a transfer to a position more to your liking by informing your supervisor of your desire. Your supervisor will keep a record of your request(s) for a transfer. Such request(s) will be reviewed when the opportunity arises and considered if it is practical in light of present or future conditions. A six (6) month trial period is required in the new position. After an employee accepts a transfer, the employee cannot return to the prior position unless the position is available, and the Department Manager chooses to return the employee to that position. The Town reserves the right to temporarily transfer an employee to any position in any department, when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the Town provided the employee being transferred meets the minimum qualifications for the position.

**Section 3.** That this ordinance is to be construed as a companion ordinance complimentary to any ordinance passed from time to time establishing a system of employment and known as the salary ordinance;

(A) That this ordinance shall be effective to the extent that it is not in conflict with Federal or State law;

**(B) That all other ordinances and resolutions related to the subject matter of this ordinance and not in conflict with its provisions, and the enabling instruments dealing with public employee retirement plans, remain in full force and effect;**

(C) That all other ordinances and resolutions in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed and have no further force or effect;

**Section 3.** That this ordinance shall become and remain in full force and effect from and after the date of its passage and adoption upon its signature by the executive as attested thereto by the clerk-treasurer, in the manner prescribed by IC 36-5-2-10(a).

Introduced and Filed on 9th day of February 2026. Consideration on same day or at same meeting of introduction sustained a vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed, pursuant to IC 36-5-2-9.8.

**DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED** this 9th Day of February, 2026, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

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

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George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

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

**New Business:**

1. **Proposed Ordinance No. 1846:** An Ordinance of the Town of Highland, Indiana, concerning the funding of capital improvement projects for the Fire Department by the Board of Works of the Town through the issuance and sale of general obligation bonds, and other matters connected therewith.

Bond Counsel asked that the item be removed from the agenda as they wanted to make further modifications to the language. The Council President removed the item from the agenda.

2. Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement. Action of the Town Council as appointing authority to consider approval of an Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement filed by George Georgeff, who, is a Real Estate Broker for McColly Real Estate. Mr. Georgeff is a legislative appointment to the Highland Redevelopment Commission. This filing is pursuant to IC 35-44-1-3.]

Councilor Georgeff turned the gavel over to Vice President Turich who called for the question.

Councilor Black moved to approve the filing of the Conflicts Disclosure Statement of George Georgeff as his appointing authority and then to further accept the statement as the governing body of the Town. Councilor Robertson seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives, no negatives and one (1) abstention, with Councilors Turich, Robertson, Black and Scheeringa voting in the affirmative and Councilor Georgeff abstaining. The motion passed. The appointing authority approved the statement and accepted it as the governing body. Councilor Turich turned the gavel back over to Councilor Georgeff.



**UNIFORM CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**  
State Form 54266 (R2 / 6-15) / Form 236  
STATE BOARD OF ACCOUNTS

**Indiana Code 35-44.1-1-4**

A public servant who knowingly or intentionally has a pecuniary interest in or derives a profit from a contract or purchase connected with an action by the governmental entity served by the public servant commits conflict of interest, a Class D Felony. A public servant has a pecuniary interest in a contract or purchase if the contract or purchase will result or is intended to result in an ascertainable increase in the income or net worth of the public servant or a dependent of the public servant. "Dependent" means any of the following: the spouse of a public servant; a child, stepchild, or adoptee (as defined in IC 31-9-2-2) of a public servant who is unemancipated and less than eighteen (18) years of age; and any individual more than one-half (1/2) of whose support is provided during a year by the public servant.

The foregoing consists only of excerpts from IC 35-44.1-1-4. Care should be taken to review IC 35-44.1-1-4 in its entirety.

1. Name and Address of Public Servant Submitting Statement: George Georgeff  
2251 Oakdale Street, Highland, IN 46322
2. Title or Position With Governmental Entity: Highland Town Council & Red Commissio
3. a. Governmental Entity: Town of Highland  
b. County: Lake
4. This statement is submitted (check one):
  - a.  as a "single transaction" disclosure statement, as to my financial interest in a specific contract or purchase connected with the governmental entity which I serve, proposed to be made by the governmental entity with or from a particular contractor or vendor; or
  - b.  as an "annual" disclosure statement, as to my financial interest connected with any contracts or purchases of the governmental entity which I serve, which are made on an ongoing basis with or from particular contractors or vendors.
5. Name(s) of Contractor(s) or Vendor(s): Real Estate Broker  
McColly Real Estate  
2000 45th Avenue, Highland, IN 46322
6. Description(s) of Contract(s) or Purchase(s) (Describe the kind of contract involved, and the effective date and term of the contract or purchase if reasonably determinable. Dates required if 4(a) is selected above. If "dependent" is involved, provide dependent's name and relationship.):  
Member of the Highland Town Council & Redevelopment Commission  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. **Description of My Financial Interest** *(Describe in what manner the public servant or "dependent" expects to derive a profit or financial benefit from, or otherwise has a pecuniary interest in, the above contract(s) or purchase(s); if reasonably determinable, state the approximate dollar value of such profit or benefit.):*

Earns salary as a member of the Highland Town Council. As a Redevelopment Commission Member

he does not receive a salary.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*(Attach extra pages if additional space is needed.)*

8. **Approval of Appointing Officer or Body** *(To be completed if the public servant was appointed by an elected public servant or the board of trustees of a state-supported college or university.):*

I (We) being the Town Council of  
*(Title of Officer or Name of Governing Body)*

Town of Highland and having the power to appoint  
*(Name of Governmental Entity)*

the above named public servant to the public position to which he or she holds, hereby approve the participation to the appointed disclosing public servant in the above described contract(s) or purchase(s) in which said public servant has a conflict of interest as defined in Indiana Code 35-44.1-1-4; however, this approval does not waive any objection to any conflict prohibited by statute, rule, or regulation and is not to be construed as a consent to any illegal act.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3rd Ward Town Council

\_\_\_\_\_ 4th Ward Town Council

\_\_\_\_\_ 5th Ward Town Council  
 Elected Official Office

9. **Effective Dates** *(Conflict of interest statements must be submitted to the governmental entity prior to final action on the contract or purchase.):*

February 9, 2026  
 Date Submitted (month, day, year)

N/A  
 Date of Action on Contract or Purchase (month, day, year)

10. **Affirmation of Public Servant:** This disclosure was submitted to the governmental entity and accepted by the governmental entity in a public meeting of the governmental entity prior to final action on the contract or purchase. I affirm, under penalty of perjury, the truth and completeness of the statements made above, and that I am the above named public servant.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Public Servant)

Date: February 9, 2026  
(month, day, year)

Printed Name: George Georgeff  
(Please print legibly.)

Email Address: g.georgeff@highland.in.g

Within fifteen (15) days after final action on the contract or purchase, copies of this statement must be filed with the State Board of Accounts by uploading it here [https://gateway.ifonline.org/sboa\\_coi/](https://gateway.ifonline.org/sboa_coi/) which is the preferred method of filing, or by mailing it to the State Board of Accounts, Indiana Government Center South, 302 West Washington Street, Room E418, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204-2765 and the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the county where the governmental entity took final action on the contract or purchase.

**Comments from the Town Council:**

*(Good of the order)*

- **Councilor Doug Turich:** *Metropolitan Police Commission • Liaison and Plan Commission Member • Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals Liaison • Liaison to Building & Inspection Department*

Councilor Turich acknowledged Building Commissioner Ken Mika who reviewed the Building and Inspection Report as filed under staff reports for the month of January and then gave the following report:

**1/12/26 HIGHLAND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING / BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

- Mr. Mika briefly summarized the Building Department activity (report)
- The BZA will meet on Wednesday January 28<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM. Items on that evenings agenda are the appointment of officers for 2026. A Public Hearing for a Use Variance request at 2715 Main St. for a Tattoo Studio. And a Variance request for additional signage on a commercial building located at 10343 Indianapolis Blvd.
- The PC had a Study Session last Wednesday and met with Phil Roth of Structure Point who went over a draft of the Comprehensive plan that has been in the works for the Town.

Ken Mika  
Town of Highland  
Building Commissioner / Zoning Administrator

Councilor Turich then acknowledged Metropolitan Police Chief Ralph Potesta who gave the following report:

Town Council Meeting Notes for 02/09/2026 – Police Department – 01/26/2026 thru 02/09/2026

0 – Burglaries / Robberies / Rapes / Auto Thefts / Thefts from Vehicles

2 Assaults with 1 arrest.

Responded to 13 Domestic Disturbances – 2 arrests made

7 DUI arrests made

36 Accidents handled

4 Retail Thefts:

0 arrests

No Highland or Illinois residents involved.

No large scale monetary losses.

Looking at closing our records department on Saturdays due to the elimination of our part time records clerks. We had been open from 8am-noon on Saturdays. We had our clerks monitor the number of citizens who came in or called on Saturdays and it was very minimal. We are one of only a few local departments that have weekend hours. This will take effect this Saturday February 14<sup>th</sup>.

Opticom Grant update meeting tomorrow in Munster – Grant money will be used to replace all outdated equipment at our intersections as well as inside our squad cards and firetrucks.

• **Councilor Alex Robertson:** *Fire Department Liaison • Redevelopment Commission Member • Public Works Liaison • Liaison to Main Street Bureau • Liaison to the Tree Board • Liaison to the Highland Neighbor for Sustainability.*

Council Robertson acknowledged Public Works Director Mark Knesek who said they've had quite a few water main breaks lately. He said most of them are under the roads which is caused by frost under the road which is about 2 foot deep now and pushes down on the water lines. He said they are all cracks on the bottoms of the main. He said there was one on Forrest by Phil's house. It was bubbling up in the west parkway. They chased it all night long. Finally, the day crew came in and took over. The break was actually under the east curb. The water followed the course of least resistance. He said today, public works crews fixed an 18-inch feed running from the town garage to the pump station. It was leaking under the curb. He said they were running pretty low on salt. Last week, the Town received its shipment of salt which had been three (3) weeks on back-ordered from the salt company. The company actually delivered the current order with the back ordered order, so the Town is pretty well set for now. He said the Kennedy Avenue Bridge project was bid out by the Little Calumet River Basin Committee and a company out of Illinois, Dunnett Bay was low bidder. The Little Calumet is planning on awarding the bid on the 18<sup>th</sup> of this month. The project will take approximately 18 to 20 months. During construction, one side of the road will be open at all times. He said if we don't have any snow starting tonight, the leaf vacs will be out picking up the remaining leaves throughout Town.

Councilor Robertson then acknowledged Fire Chief Glenn Schlessler who said there were 67 runs for the month of January. He said the station projects are ongoing i.e., lighting, flooring, new air compressor. He said the EOC is now functional. He said the new directs will be in service Friday and will get the final lettering on it this Wednesday. He said they put a big dent in the facility work. He said two (2) firefighters completed Inspector 1 and have passed their state test and are just waiting for the certification to be official.

• **Councilor Tom Black:** *Redevelopment Commission Liaison and Member • Member of the Lake County Solid Waste Management District Board • Member of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIPRC) • Shared Ethics Representative • Liaison Traffic Safety*

Councilor Black acknowledged Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra who gave the following report:

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

FEBRUARY 9, 2026

Maria Becerra

Eliminating Blight

8436 Kennedy - The abandoned gas station – The Redevelopment Commission has acquired the property. There is a Request for Quotes to demolish the small structure and clear the lot to make it a greenspace.

Abandoned Gas Station on 45<sup>th</sup> will be next as soon as the Tax Commissioner process steps are taken and the Town could pursue a donation.

Commercial Grants We have one business downtown, Fagen Miller Funeral Home has completed their interior/exterior improvements. Just a reminder through the Redevelopment funds, the Commercial Improvement Grants are still available. Any business interested in improving the exterior or interior of their building can be eligible for 30% reimbursement of their investment up to \$40,000 per building. Contact Redevelopment.

Homeownership Forgivable Loans are available for the Town's Police Officers and Fireman along with full time Municipal employees. Sixty thousand was approved for \$10,000 each participant. This program is being funded with Gaming funds that the Town receives. The Redevelopment office will be overseeing this program. The Home Guidelines were sent to several lenders in Highland for their internal reviews. We have received one application which will be presented to the Town Council for approval.

Annual Reporting - The Redevelopment staff is working on Annual Report and several upcoming reporting requirements for the year. The Safe Streets for all Grant Close out report was completed.

Main Street – Members have finalized the Downtown events for the Summer & Fall. On June 13<sup>th</sup> there will be a sidewalk sale. There will be 3 Big Restaurant Crawls planned, August 25<sup>th</sup>, September 29<sup>th</sup> and the Haunting in Highland Halloween is planned for October 27<sup>th</sup>.

Councilor Black announced a Drive Clean Grant the Town received.



6100 Southport Road  
 Portage, Indiana 46368  
 (219) 763-6060  
 www.nirpc.org

February 4, 2026

Thomas Black  
 Town of Highland  
 3333 Ridge Road  
 Highland, IN 46322

RE: Award of Federal Funds from the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

Congratulations! The Town of Highland has been awarded \$ 133,120.00 in Federal Transportation Funds from the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) for the following project:

Purchase of Zero Emission (Electric) Vehicles

Please understand that the award amount is contingent upon the availability of funding through Congressional Appropriations to the State of Indiana. Also, it is important to understand that these funds are a part of the Federal-aid Highway Program, which is a reimbursable grant, thus no funds may be claimed until the documentation of payment for vehicle(s) is received. Additionally, costs incurred prior to the issuance of a PO will not nor can be reimbursed.

These funds, administered by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), may only be used as reimbursement for those items eligible within Federal Guidelines (unless instructed otherwise by the MPO). Proof of order must be presented to NIRPC before a FMIS letter will be approved, signed and forwarded to INDOT to generate a Purchase Order (PO).

This funding award has been divided among the phases of the project. The following amounts may only be used on the phases identified below:

Total Project Costs: \$ 208,000.00

| State Funding Year | Phase | Federal Funds | Required Local Match | Fed Funding Type |
|--------------------|-------|---------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 2026               | PE    | \$ 133,120.00 | \$ 74,880.00         | CRP              |
|                    | RW    | \$ 0.00       | \$ 0.00              | N/A              |
|                    | CN    | \$ 0.00       | \$ 0.00              | N/A              |
| Total Award:       |       | \$ 133,120.00 | \$ 74,880.00         |                  |

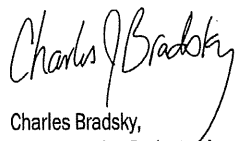
This funding award must be obligated in the State Funding Year (SFY) identified above, which occurs July 1st to June 30th. Additional funding awards for this project may or may not be available, so the LPA should proceed as if the funds are not available. Any additional costs or cost increases in any phase of this project will be 100% the responsibility of the LPA. Any non-participating elements of the project are not eligible for federal funds and therefore will also be 100% the responsibility of the LPA. This award may or may not include funding for all phases of a project and there is no guarantee that additional funding awards will be available. Upon receiving a PO from INDOT, monthly reimbursement requests must be submitted to INDOT to prove progress to FHWA on the project. The absence of regular reimbursement requests to INDOT can show inactivity and INDOT may close the project without recourse, at which time, any remaining funding award will be revoked and all funds lost, per Indiana State Board of Accounts Guidelines. If this happens, NIRPC is not responsible for giving additional funds to replace those that were lost.

Please Note: For this award, the total funds reimbursed cannot exceed sixty-four percent (64%) of the total project cost or the awarded amount.

To maintain eligibility for this award of federal funds, the designated ERC for your community must maintain certification through INDOT. The ERC will be required to actively participate throughout the life of the project, maintain project records on behalf of the LPA, and direct the contracted consultant. The ERC and the contracted consultant will also be required to attend Quarterly Tracking Meetings and follow the Quarterly Tracking Process as outlined by the policies of the NIRPC.

A hard copy of this correspondence will not be sent, and it is advised that the ERC keep a copy for their records.

Sincerely,



Charles Bradsky,  
Transportation Projects Manager  
NIRPC

Ecc: Ty Warner, NIRPC  
Tom Vander Woude, NIRPC  
Mark Knesek, Town of Highland  
John Banasiak, Town of Highland  
Ryan Lisek, Drive Clean Indiana  
Marcia Blansett, INDOT  
Breanne Freese, INDOT

• **Councilor Philip Scheeringa:** • *Park Board Liaison* • *Information Communications and Technology Department Liaison* • *Redevelopment Commission Member*

Councilor Scheeringa began by congratulating the Highland Girls Basketball Team on their second straight Sectional Championship. He acknowledged Park Superintendent Tim Diamond who said there is a Park Board Meeting on Thursday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. He said he is still looking for public input on the five (5) year master plan. He said this will be the last session to give input for the five (5) year master plan before he finalizes it and presents it at the March meeting. He said the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in March, at the Lincoln Center, will be a disabilities prom. It will run from 6:00 o'clock p.m. to 9:00 o'clock p.m.. The prom used to be run at the Hildebrandt Hall in Griffith by a group of volunteers but that group has disbanded, so now it will be in Highland. It was always a great event. I've been to it many times, so I encourage folks to participate in that and check that out for all people that have any special needs for that prom. He said the daughter-daddy dance will be held on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March in the Lincoln Center. The theme this year will be the 70's.

Councilor Scheeringa then acknowledged IT Director Ed Dabrowski, who said he had a request about closing the Town Hall on certain days as the data is migrated over to the cloud. He said it is important that the public knows that they won't be able to pay water bills or process building permits. The departments won't be able to process purchase orders. The doors will have to be locked. The BS&A system can be used for researching but no data entry. He said he wanted to close the Town Hall on March 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup>, which is a Thursday and Friday. Training is scheduled for those days. On the 6<sup>th</sup>, the data needs to be extracted and converted into the cloud. During that time, the BS&A System can't be used. The system will be locked to cash receipting, building permits and purchase orders. The goal is to go live on March 9<sup>th</sup>. He said he has to come in early work with the representatives of BS&A and do an evaluation of the existing data that was pulled over from the old system. If the data didn't convert properly, going live will be scrubbed. He is recommending that the Town Hall remains closed until they get the go ahead from BS&A. He said representative's from BS&A will not be on site but they will be available via phone immediately.

• **Councilor George Georgeff:** *Town Executive (I.C. 36-1-2-5-(4); I.C. 36-5-2-2; I.C. 36-5-2-7);* • *Board of Trustees of the Police Pension Fund, Chair (By Law)* • *Budget Committee Chairman* • *Redevelopment Commission Member* • *Liaison to the Board of Water Works* • *Liaison to the Sanitary Board*

Councilor Georgeff said he had no reports this evening.

That concluded comments from the Council and President Georgeff then turned it over to comments from visitor's or residents, reminding them to limit their comments to 2 minutes.

**Comments from Visitors or Residents:**

Rick Volbrecht, Highland, said this is not a pressing matter but he has addressed it with some Town Officials who he will not mention but this has to do with garbage containers. He says sometimes they are left out for a few days. He happened to leave his out for a few days, more than he liked but with the ice on the drive-way and his pulled thigh muscle, he chose to leave them out there and not risk falling or asking for help or sympathy. He refuses to accept help. He said he received a notice and this not about the notice as he admitted he was guilty. When he did get the chance, he removed his garbage cans and found a notice taped to his garbage cans. What was bothersome to him that on the notice, there is no name of who wrote the citation, the time or date. He said the notice said that future violations would result in a citation. If there is no date, how would anybody know the future date?

Terry Steagall, Highland began by saying sometimes we need to reflect on our history a little bit. We're coming up on 250 years of fighting for our freedom. We need to reflect on what happened in the 1860s, with the, Civil War over slavery. He reflected on Attorney Reed's grandfather, who was a member of Local 1010 Steelworkers. He said his grandfather, in 1937, went over to Republic Steel, giving strike support the striking Republic Steel workers on Memorial Day weekend and he was one of those ten (10) individuals who were shot dead by overzealous police officers. He said Attorney Reed's father was only three (3) weeks old and the time and never got to see his father. He said he wears this tee-shirt as a picket sign to celebrate Black History month. The Memphis sanitation workers went on strike February 12, 1968. Martin Luther King, Jr. came down to Memphis to support the striking sanitation workers, gave a speech on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and was assassinated on April 4, 1968. We have the same thing right now with ICE. We need to take a hard look at what's going on and realize that Americans are getting killed on the street by overzealous ICE officers, which we cannot tolerate in a civil society. He said tonight, the Valparaiso City Council is going to pass a resolution opposing ICE and the killing of American. ICE is busting into houses and dragging people out of their houses that are American citizens without any warrant or anything. I'm sure you've all seen the stuff on the TV, so let's take that into consideration and think about a resolution.

Jeff Rosignol, Highland said the individual who just spoke, did not tell you that these folks that were getting hurt or shot or killed, is that they were breaking the law. They had no right to be at this protest. The protest was done by paid agitators and they interfered with federal law enforcement people doing their job. The problem up there was, like it is at a lot of places around the country, is the local police are not doing their job in enforcing the laws. He said he wasn't sure exactly sure where he was going with his comments but I have a pretty good idea. As far as he is concerned, and I think a lot of the people in this town think the same as he does, we have a great police department and to avoid the situations that are happening in Minnesota and California and the rest of the country, we need to support our police department or whoever comes in and enforces federal law. Its happening here in Highland this Saturday or Sunday at the Grindhouse Café. He said the Northwest Community Response is going to meet there. He said his group would be there also.

Ronald Kazak, St. John, Indiana said that all of this ICE conversations is that these federal agents are trying to enforce federal laws. They are trying to correct something that happened from a previous administration. Since this is federal law, there isn't an option to pick and choose what laws are going to be enforces and which are not. These agents are

coming in with their warrants, not looking to cause damage and are subjecting themselves to possible lethal situations. The protestors, are paid and come from where ever and are being criminals.

Councilor Georgeff asked if there were any other comments. Hearing none, he closed comments from the public and brought it back to the Council. He then asked for a motion to pay claims.

Payment of Accounts Payable Vouchers. There being no further comments from visitors or residents, Councilor Robertson moved to allow the vendors accounts payable vouchers as filed on the pending accounts payable docket, covering the period January 28, 2026 through February 10, 2026, . Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The accounts payable vouchers for the vendor docket were allowed, payments allowed in advance were ratified, the payroll dockets were ratified and for all remaining invoices, the Clerk-Treasurer was authorized to make payment.

Accounts payable vouchers January 28, 2026 – February 10,2026, in the amount of  
**\$1,060,484.13**

General Fund, \$736,515.11; MVH Fund, \$60,479.30; LR&S, \$1,661.10;  
LAW Enforcement Continuing Education Training and Supply Fund, \$618.00. Public Safety  
Income, \$57,279.21; Donation, \$1,056.39; MCCD, \$1,004.04; Gaming Revenue, \$17,493.70;  
ICT Fund, \$20,088.28; Insurance Premium, \$164,289.00

Payroll Docket for payday of February 6, 2026 by fund:  
General, \$373,835.37

Payroll Docket for payday of February 6, 2026:

Office of Clerk-Treasurer, \$15,963.03; Building and Inspection Department,  
\$10,638.25; Metropolitan Police Department, \$157,482.09; Public Works  
Department (Agency), \$111,409.25; Fire Department, \$6,304.99 and  
**Information and Technology Department, \$4,437.37**  
Total Payroll: \$306,234.98

Adjournment of Plenary Meeting. There being no further business on the agenda, the Town Council President declared the regular plenary meeting of the Town Council of Monday, February 9, 2026, adjourned at 7:15 o'clock p.m.

Mark Herak  
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved by the Town Council at its meeting of February 23, 2026.

