

MINUTES OF A STUDY SESSION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND PARK, TEXAS, HELD AT TOWN HALL, 4700 DREXEL DRIVE, HIGHLAND PARK, TX, 75205, AT 9:15 A.M. ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025.

Mayor Will C. Beecherl, Mayor Pro Tem Don Snell, Town Council Members Marc Myers, Lydia Novakov, and Leland White attended the meeting. Council Member Alan Friedman was absent.

Public Comment

Mayor Beecherl asked if anyone wished to address the Town Council about any item listed on the agenda and explained that the Town Council may not discuss or make decisions on items not listed on the agenda. Public comments are limited to three minutes per speaker unless otherwise required by law. Items suggested for action may be placed on a future agenda at the Town Council's discretion. There was no comment.

Future Agenda Discussion

Review, discuss, and consider the opportunity for a Town Council Member to request an item to be placed on a future Town Council meeting agenda. The Mayor asked if any Town Council Member would like to request an item be placed on a future Town Council study session agenda for discussion or consideration. There was no comment.

Reports

Review and discuss the engagement of a consulting firm to assist the Town with a full rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance. Jeff Armstrong, Director of Community Development, explained that the current Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1965 and has undergone numerous amendments. These incremental changes have resulted in a poorly organized document that is difficult to navigate, ambiguous in language, and outdated with modern standards. As a result, the Zoning Ordinance is no longer equipped to address the community's evolving needs and expectations. A comprehensive rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance is beneficial to address its current deficiencies and to align it with modern standards and community expectations. The process to begin a rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance may include engaging with a professional consultant specializing in zoning and urban planning, developing a timeline and budget for the rewrite process, and facilitating community input sessions to ensure alignment with resident needs and preferences. In response to a question raised by Council Member Myers, Mr. Armstrong estimated that the process would take less than a year and cost approximately between \$100,000 and \$150,000. The Town Council agreed with staff collecting proposals for the Town Council to review at a future Town Council meeting.

Review and discuss the development of a strategic plan for the Town of Highland Park. Chelsey Gordon, Director of Policy Development & Strategic Initiatives, explained that strategic plans are used by municipalities to communicate high-level priorities of the governing body to the public and to establish direction for Town staff to follow as policy and funding recommendations are developed and presented to the Town Council. In 2013, Town staff worked with the Town Council on a strategic planning process that concluded with a document identifying goals and objectives discussed during meetings held with the Town Council. While not acted on by the Town Council then, the process identified areas of importance to the Town. In 2023, the Town Council participated in a planning session with Baker Tilly as part of the Town Administrator recruitment

process. The results from that planning session included a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (“SWOC”) Analysis. The current Town Council expressed an interest in completing a strategic planning process to help identify goals and priorities that will continue to make Highland Park a premier community. This plan will provide stakeholders with a living framework setting out direction, goals, and strategies approved by the elected officials to accomplish their vision. The most comprehensive strategic plan typically includes a mission statement, vision statement, goals/priorities, strategies, and values. Once the Town Council has approved the strategic plan, pre-retreat work will begin. Resident involvement will be facilitated through a resident survey focusing on current levels of importance and satisfaction with various Town services and input on new initiatives and emerging community issues. During this time, a strategic planning consultant will also be selected to help facilitate and guide the process. The consultant will begin one-on-one interviews with the Town Council and staff. These interviews, SWOC Analysis, and data from the resident survey and past strategic planning efforts will be used to frame discussions at the strategic planning retreat. Objectives of the retreat will include reaffirming or developing a mission and vision statement, identifying goals and priorities, and cultivating strategies for each goal. The Mayor and Town Council agreed to move forward and requested to be included in selecting the strategic planning consultant. Staff will continue to develop this program and will present consultant options for the Town Council to review at a future Town Council meeting.

Closed Session

1. *In accordance with the Texas Government Code Chapter 551, Subchapter D, Section 551.071 - CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY - the Town Council will convene into closed session for consultation with and to receive legal advice from the Town Attorney regarding historic preservation and pending or contemplated litigation (Sam C. Tamborello v. Town of Highland Park - Case No. 3-24CV1356-E, Patricia Ellis and James Ellis v. Town of Highland Park - Case No. DC-24-06608, and USAI, LP v. Town of Highland Park - Cause No. DC-20-80213). Mayor Beecherl recessed the study session at 8:51 a.m. Mayor Beecherl convened a closed session at 8:52 a.m. Mayor Beecherl ended the closed session at 9:32 a.m. and reconvened the study session in open session at 9:32 a.m. No final action, decision, or vote was taken during the closed session.*

Open Session

1. *Pursuant to Section 551.102 of the Texas Government Code, the final action, decision, or vote regarding Closed Session Item 1. above shall be made, if any. Mayor Beecherl reconvened the study session in open session at 9:32 a.m. No motion was made.*

Mayor Beecherl adjourned the meeting at 9:33 a.m.

APPROVED on this 21st day of January 2025.

APPROVED:

Will C. Beecherl
Mayor

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joanna Mekeal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joanna Mekeal
Town Secretary