

CITY OF HIGHLAND HEIGHTS
Regular Council Meeting Minutes

August 4, 2026

Approved: *September 1, 2026*

On Tuesday, August 4, 2026 at 7:03 p.m. Mayor Meyers called the regular Council meeting to order at 176 Johns Hill Road.

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Gregory Meyers. Councilmembers Deborah Ball, Gary Chinn, John Braun, Patricia Hayley, Rene Heinrich. A quorum was present.

Councilmember Absent: Councilmember Jesse Hockenbury.

Staff Present: City Administrator, Michael Giffen; Police Chief, Bill Birkenhauer; City Clerk/Treasurer, Jeanne Pettit; Attorney, Michelle Eviston.

Staff Absent: Public Works Director, Steve Lehman; Code Enforcement Officer, Dave Fornash.

Minutes for Approval

- **Regular Meeting Minutes of July 7, 2026:** These minutes had been previously emailed to the Mayor, Council Members, and City Staff for review.
- **Action Taken:** Member Ball made a motion to accept the minutes from the regular council meeting held July 7, 2026. Seconded by Member Braun. Discussion: None. Yes: 5, No: 0, Abstain: 0. Mayor Meyers declared the motion passed.

Municipal Road Aid Fund

- An announcement for citizen input was posted on the front of the City Building, the City's Facebook page and website. Notice was sent to media outlets requesting notification.
 - **Discussion**
 - Top of Brandywine, area by handicap ramps needs repair.
 - Katherine needs to be reconstructed.
 - 123 Ridge Hill at the end of the driveway and into the street needs attention.
 - Bottom of Camp Road where it turns into Hale, side of the road is starting to fall away.

Scheduled Guests: None

Correspondence

- Councilmember Chinn received an email thanking Public Works and City Council for repairs to the Hilltop community garden shed, improving the water supply, and delivering a hose, as promised.

Staff Reports

- City Administrator – Michael Giffen
 - Reviewed the Public Works and Code Enforcement reports.
- Police Chief – Bill Birkenhauer
 - Repaving of northbound US 27 from 471 to Ft. Thomas – officers are helping with traffic.
 - New school bus law – All lanes in both directions of US 27 are required to stop for a school bus.
- City Clerk/Treasurer – Jeanne Pettit
 - Update on the tax rate process.
- Code Enforcement Officer – Dave Fornash
- Public Works Supervisor – Steve Lehman
- Attorney – Michelle Eviston

Unfinished Business: None

Citizens to Address Council: None

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New Business

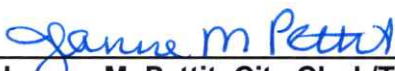
- **Action Taken:** Member Chinn made a motion to cancel the August 18, 2026 council meeting due to lack of business. Seconded by Member Hayley. Discussion: None. Yes: 5, No: 0, Abstain: 0. Mayor Meyers declared the motion passed.
- **Action Taken:** Member Heinrich made a motion to go into executive session to have a discussion that might lead to the dismissal of a councilmember without restricting the person's right to a public hearing, if requested, per KRS 61.810.1(f). Seconded by Member Chinn. Discussion: None. Yes: 5, No: 0, Abstain: 0. Mayor Meyers declared the motion passed.
- **Action Taken:** Member Heinrich made a motion to come out of executive session. Seconded by Member Braun. Discussion: None. Yes: 5, No: 0, Abstain: 0. Mayor Meyers declared the motion passed. No action was taken in executive session.
- Councilmember Heinrich discussed Mr. Hockenbury's guilty plea of sexual abuse, third, which is when a person subjects another person to sexual conduct without the person's consent. She explained that Mr. Hockenbury provided a free divorce for a woman. After court, at which the divorce finalized, the client offered to take Mr. Hockenbury home; he does not drive. During the drive, he wanted to stop at a bar to celebrate, she denied that and said she just wanted to go home. When they got to Mr. Hockenbury's residence in Highland Heights, he grabbed her crotch and propositioned her.
Mr. Hockenbury plead guilty to sexual abuse, third. Now that we have guilty plea, Councilmember Heinrich feels pretty strongly that, as a citizen of Highland Heights, she does not want him as part of the group of people that represent her. Councilmember Heinrich implored Mr. Hockenbury do the right thing and resign from council and resign his application to run again in November.
Councilmember Heinrich stated that what Mr. Hockenbury has done is misconduct and he should not continue to have a role in a position of power, like a city council position. Councilmember Heinrich stated that, as an attorney, the number one rule is that you don't do these things with a client. This is a black eye on city and we can't let it slide under the carpet. Councilmember Heinrich requested that City Administrator Giffen reach out and ask Mr. Hockenbury to resign and remove his name from the ballot. He needs to do the right thing; recognize he made a mistake and realize there are broader consequences than just the criminal courts.
Councilmembers Braun, Chinn, Ball and Hayley stated their agreement with what Councilmember Heinrich said and expressed and their concern having someone on council who has plead guilty to sexual abuse. Council will pursue a public hearing, as required by KRS, if he does not resign.
Member Heinrich outlined the process to remove a council member.

Adjournment

- **Action Taken:** Member Ball made a motion to adjourn the August 4, 2026 meeting. Seconded by Member Chinn. Discussion: None. Yes: 5, No: 0, Abstain: 0. Mayor Meyers declared the motion passed.

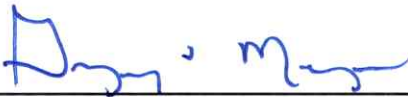
Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:25 p.m. on Tuesday, August 4, 2026.

Submitted by:



Jeanne M. Pettit, City Clerk/Treasurer

Signed:



Gregory V. Meyers, Mayor