

**MINUTES OF A OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE CITY OF
HIGHLAND PARK**

MEETING DATE: February 9, 2026

MEETING LOCATION: City Hall 1707 St Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL 60035

I. Call to Order

At 5:30 PM, Mayor Roterling called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call:

II. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Roterling, Councilmembers Center, Bruckman, Tapia, Lidawer

Absent: Councilmembers Ross, Blumberg

Staff Present: City Manager Neukirch, Director of Public Works Bannon, Community Development Director Fontane, Assistant City Manager Jason, Police Chief Jogmen, Finance Director McCaulou, Fire Chief Schrage, Assistant City Manager Taub, Communications Manager Bennett, Commander Curran, Assistant to the City Manager Palbitska, Business Development Manager Elder, Building Division Manager Mohanchandra

Also Present: Corporation Counsel Elrod, Assistant Corporation Counsel Martinez

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole Held on January 12, 2026

B. Approval of the Minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole held on January 12, 2026

Councilmember Lidawer moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole Held on January 12, 2026 and the Minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole Held on January 12, 2026. Councilmember Center seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, the Mayor declared the motion Passed (5 - 0).

MOVER:	Councilmember Lidawer
SECONDER:	Councilmember Center
AYES:	Mayor Roterling, Councilmembers Center, Bruckman, Tapia, Lidawer
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Ross, Blumberg

IV. Scheduled Business

A. Pedestrian Bridge Design & Reconstruction Options

City Manager Neukirch provided introductory comments related to the presentation for the Pedestrian Bridge Design and Reconstruction Options. She noted that staff is seeking feedback from the Council but no final determinations will be made tonight.

She introduced Duane O'Laughlin, Chief Operation Officer for Ciorba Group, and Public Works Director Ron Bannon as subject matter experts for this project. O'Laughlin presented an overview of the Pedestrian Bridge project, including updates on engineering design options, new construction timelines, and options for rehabilitation or reconstruction.

The Council, Mr. O'Laughlin and staff discussed options and costs related to either reconstruction or rehabilitation of the bridge. They discussed the impact the ITEP funds would have on the cost of a new bridge, the outcome of a review of all grant opportunities, allowance for both bike and pedestrian traffic with the new bridge design, how rehabilitation would not be ADA compliant and therefore would not qualify for the ITEP funds, maintenance cost and life expectancy timelines that could affect rehabilitation versus new build, and the riding and/or walking surface of the bridge. They discussed the bridge being a gateway into the community and how a new bridge could add to the vibrancy of Highland Park as well as keep branding cohesive across the City. They discussed potential conversations with Lake County.

City Manager Neukirch noted that the total cost for a rehab or new bridge construction will be added to the discussion regarding the Capital Improvement Plan ("CIP") that is slated for the March 30, 2026, Committee of the Whole meeting. She noted that it is important to review the 10-year CIP to understand the impact of the bridge on other projects and impact to the City's budget and long-term financial outlook.

B. Building Code Update

Community Development Director Fontane presented information on a comprehensive amendment package related to building and property maintenance codes. He noted that formal policy consideration of the amendments will be placed on the next Council agenda for formal consideration.

The Council voiced their appreciation for the comprehensive presentation.

The Council, Corporation Counsel Elrod, and staff discussed a "grandfathered" provision and how that would apply going forward, quality of the codes that are updated and created through the process, assessment of ensuring green sustainability codes are maintained within the updated information, processes for choosing the codes for recommendation, and code versus regulation and enforcement procedures. They discussed whether it could be possible to offer an incentive to homeowners to update their homes based on the updated codes and that the better option would be to educate homeowners before offering an incentive to make changes. They discussed the frequency of review of the codes in order to make recommendations for updates

and how all municipalities work to keep their codes updated. Director Fontane clarified that Highland Park does not rely specifically on timelines of other municipalities adoptions but more on staying in line with ISO and allowing time for staff and design professionals to understand the updates that are made.

V. Adjournment

Councilmember Lidawer moved to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting. Councilmember Bruckman seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, Mayor Rotering declared the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee of the Whole adjourned its meeting at 7:01 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Palbitska
Assistant to the City Manager/Deputy City Clerk