

Mayor's Message - Kurt Ostler

With tears in my eyes, I am writing this newsletter as your Mayor. It is difficult to put into words the gratitude I feel for the residents of Highland who placed their trust in me over these past four years. Serving as your Mayor has been one of the highlights of my life, and I will forever be thankful for the opportunity.

I have been blessed to work alongside exceptional city staff, an outstanding City Administrator, an incredible Police and Fire Chief and their departments, wonderful and dedicated City Council members, and a supportive wife and family. Their commitment and passion have allowed us to accomplish far more together than any one person could hope to do alone. Being Mayor has truly been an enjoyable, humbling, and rewarding experience.

Over these four years, our city has moved forward in meaningful and lasting ways. None of these accomplishments would have been possible without a unified and supportive City Council and the tireless efforts of our remarkable city staff. Together, we have strengthened Highland's infrastructure, enhanced our parks, improved public safety, and prepared for the future while protecting the community character we all love.

Below are just a few highlights of what has been accomplished during past four years. These were accomplish by resident's tax dollar, utility fees, grants, generous donors, dedicated parks sales tax, road and public safety fees.

City Improvements & Infrastructure

- New 17-acre "Highland Family Park" – thank you to all those generous donors
- New Park Maintenance Building adjacent to the Community Center (come to the open house to see the new building on December 8 from 5-7pm)
- Replacement of playgrounds at Heritage Park and Highland Glen Park
- Updates to our City's General Plan, the first full update in 17 years
- New 1100' deep culinary water well on 11200 North
- New pressurized irrigation pump station on 6000 West
- Upgrades to multiple sewer and water lines throughout the city

Public Safety & Community Wellbeing

- Implemented a Traffic Calming Toolbox to help neighborhoods address local traffic concerns.
- Lone Peak Public Safety District improvements: new ladder truck, new ambulances, improved police and fire staffing levels, and a revised public safety funding model
- Highland/Alpine recognized by Safewise as the safest cities in Utah for 2018, 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025.

Financial Stewardship & Fiscal Responsibility

Over the last four years:

- Sales tax revenue increased from \$3.2 million → \$4.3 million
- The City received \$8.1 million in grant funding
- We invested \$13.4 million into road improvements
- Installed pressurized irrigation meters, as required by State

I have worked hard to keep my campaign promise: *"Your tax dollars are hard-earned, and I will never forget that as I watch over them and make careful decisions."* I am pleased to report that every project, improvement, and initiative listed above was accomplished without raising City Property taxes, all while reducing our bond debt. Highland is on track to be completely debt-free in 2027, when the final bond payment is made.

I hope each of you felt heard, valued, and represented. I have always tried to be responsive, transparent, and available. I love Highland. I have fought to keep our trails, preserve our open space and keep the open feeling, supportive of large lots and the city's General Plan, and the unique character that makes our city special. I intend to stay engaged and continue working to protect the Highland we know and cherish.

Thank you, once again to the Highland residents, for allowing me the privilege of serving you. I will forever hold this experience close to my heart.

With sincere gratitude,
Mayor Kurt Ostler



CALENDAR

December 2: City Council Meeting/ General Plan Hearing
6pm, City Hall

December 8: Parks Maintenance Building Open House
5-7pm, 5378W 10400N

December 11: City Council Vacancy Appointment 6pm, City Hall

December 13: Wreaths Across America
10am, Highland City Cemetery

December 18: Food Drive
City Hall, Now through December 18

December 27 — January 9: Christmas Tree Disposal
Bring trees to the field across from the Police Station and place them inside the bins.

On Christmas week garbage will be delayed by 1 day for those with a Thursday pickup.

PHONE NUMBERS

City Offices: 801-756-5751

Library: 801-772-4528

Justice Court: 801-772-4525

Police Department & Animal Control: 801-756-9800

Fire Department: 801-763-5365

After-Hours Public Works Emergency: 801-420-2553

Waste Management (pick-up &

ONLINE

Report a concern, pay a bill, reserve pavilions, request alerts, etc. at: highlandut.gov

Or you can text us with any questions or concerns at

385-421-9045

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Highland City

City Council Meeting Brief

For full agendas, minutes, & audio, visit <http://bit.ly/HC-agendas>. For video, go to our YouTube channel @HighlandCityUtah or visit bit.ly/HC-citycouncil.

November 18, 2025

- **Council Vacancy:** Due to the resignation of Brittney P. Bills, any qualified person interested in being considered may contact Stephannie Cottle, Highland City Recorder, at (801) 772-4505.
- **General Plan:** Give your feedback on the draft at bit.ly/HC-currentprojects. Share your comments by Nov 24th and come to the public hearing on Dec 2nd.

Highland Historical Society – “The Christmas I Remember Best” by Charlie Greenland

Below is a story submitted by the Historical Society about a Christmas experience of an early Highland resident.

It was difficult getting out of that warm bed so early that Christmas morning in 1953 so I could go milk the neighbor's cows for him. I'd probably miss the best part of Christmas – getting up to enjoy the early morning excitement and surprises. Of course, the thrills aren't the same at fifteen as they are at ten or five but this was an exciting day for me anyway. Dad was better off financially than he'd ever been because he was working at the sugar factory for longer periods each year, and with six of my brothers and sisters now living away from home, this Christmas promised to be better than ever for the three of us remaining – me and my twin sisters. No more Christmases without a tree, no more presents wrapped in brown paper or in grocery sacks with the bottoms cut out – we actually had a tree and some pretty Christmas wrapping paper this year!

I dressed quickly – you have to when you sleep in an unheated basement room in winter – and went upstairs. The house seemed strangely quiet and empty. It wasn't often I'd gotten up before Dad had the fire going in the coal stove in the kitchen and I hadn't realized how cold it must be for him waiting for the fire to warm the room. I paused briefly to look with satisfaction at the Christmas tree with the beautifully wrapped gifts all around, then hurried to get dressed in my warmest clothing: the old, high-collared navy peacoat – almost too small for me now – that had been rescued from who knows where, my brown cotton gloves with the holes in the fingers, that old black hat of Dad's with the funny earflaps and those too-small buckle overshoes.

The half-mile walk was quite forgettable, except for the cold and it was snowing lightly, as I peered out through the slit between my hat and collar without looking much to left or right. As I arrived at the neighbor's house I quietly hoped that they hadn't forgotten to put the milk bucket out for me as they had sometimes, because I hated to disturb them this morning, but it was there, hanging on the weathered post by the back door.

As I took it down, something caught my eye through the window in the back door and as I looked closer I could see the humble Christmas of this family lying on the kitchen table – no Christmas tree – every package wrapped in brown paper! It was only a brief glance but I was stunned! Our family was not the last one in the whole world to “modernize” our Christmas!

As I walked the fifty yards to the barn I felt much subdued and began to think more deeply about my life and my attitudes. This was somewhat of a new experience for me, for what fifteen year old boy has very many serious thoughts?

The big, double barn doors were partially drifted shut with snow and the noise I made in entering startled the animals to their feet, except for one brown cow in the corner. As I approached her and my eyes became accustomed to the dimness I could see that she had just given birth to a fine looking calf. I had known the calf was due but I thought the cow would have better sense than to give birth in such weather but the birth on this special day served to stun me again.

The cow got to her feet and began licking her calf and the calf began struggling so I knew that both were OK and I began my chores, pondering these strange, new feelings within me. Sitting on that one-legged milking stool with my head in the cow's flank, it gradually hit me. This place is a barn – a stable! That thing up there that this old cow is eating from is a – a manger! Is this the kind of place Jesus was born in? This crummy old barn? That manger filled with wiry, stickery hay? Yes! The Savior of the world was born in a place like this.

As the tears flowed freely down my face I was caught with the sudden realization that it didn't matter whether there was a Christmas tree, and it didn't matter whether the gifts were wrapped in brown paper or even if there were any gifts. What really matters is what we achieve in life regardless of our birth, circumstances or heritage and Christmas is only a reminder to think of Him whose life, begun in far more humble circumstances than mine, was lived and given for me, freely and with such great sacrifice.

I arrived home before any of the rest of the family had risen, but I have no further recollection of that day. Yet every year at this season, and usually several times between Christmases, I recall that humbling experience in an old barn many years ago and I am reminded to think of Christmas in a more spiritual light.

The Highland Historical Society invites you to make time to record one of your favorite holiday memories.

Happy Holidays!



Shauna Larson, President
801-891-7183

 @highlandcityarts  Highland City Arts Council

Contact
Visit our website!
highlandcityarts.info



All of the following events are held at the Highland City Community Center unless otherwise stated.

Friends of Art Thursday, December 4th, 10 a.m. - noon. It's a Christmas Party! Songs, stories, poems, gifts and lunch. Fun! Fun! Everyone is Welcome!

Timpanogos Ringers Christmas in the Rotunda: Dec 1st at 7 p.m. at American Fork Library. Christmas Concert: Dec. 15th at 7 p.m. at Mt. Ridge Jr. High. Tickets are \$10 at the door.

Highland Choral Arts invites you to "Adore Him" and celebrate Christmas with amazing music, delicious refreshments, and wonderful gifts in our **silent auction** at 6 p.m. on December 13th in the Timberline Auditorium and December 23rd at Jenny Oaks Baker "Joy to the World" celebration at Abravanel Hall in Salt Lake City. For tickets go to highlandchoralarts.org.

Highland Children's Choir Please join us for our Christmas concert Saturday, December 13th at 2:30 p.m., Mt. Ridge Jr. high Concert Hall. Pre-show begins 15 min before the concert.
highlandchildrenschoir.com.

Sew 'n Sews will meet Friday, December 19th from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.. It's time to party! No need to bring sewing, but, do bring a \$20 sewing gift to exchange with others and a pot luck item for a shareable lunch. Those who want to play Left Right Center are to bring 3 fat quarters.

After School Art Club Ages 8-11. Room for one - two more! Open enrollment. Registration required. Call Linda at 717-368-6924.

Watercolor Classes by Rachelle Text 801-318-8060.

Visual Art Institute Art classes for children , teens and adults. See visualartinstitute.org for more information.

Friends of the Library The Friends applaud the opening of new programs in the library. The Tweens Club will provide activities and materials to tweens ages 9-12. We're excited about the Teen Advisory Board (TAB) which will provide socialization and service opportunities for local teenagers.

On Fridays the Highland Social Hub (HSH) will be lively with activities and services for older adults. There will be games, crafts, and workshops. The library hopes to find ways to serve all the citizens.

Also, keep watch for the Santa's Shelf Christmas book sale inside the library from November 24th to December 6th.

Snow Plow Information When snow is plowed, the resulting windrow flows to the side of the road including in front of mailboxes and into driveways. We understand that this is extremely frustrating to our residents.

Because our first priority is to clear the road and create a safe travel way, it is not an option to raise the plow blade at every drive approach.

See the image below for tips on how to hopefully avoid driveway blockage issues Visit <https://www.highlandut.gov/196/Snowplowing> for additional information.

Avoid the "Second Shovel"



Wreaths Across America Join us on Saturday, December 13th at 10:00 a.m. at the Highland City Cemetery for the Wreaths Across America Ceremony. There will be a short program presented by the Daughters of the American Revolution, with special guest speaker, Hayden Paul. A wreath will be presented and displayed for each branch of the armed services. Please join us as we remember and honor the sacrifice of our veterans.

If you would like to help place a wreath or flag on each of our veteran's graves, please arrive at 9:00 a.m.

Quality Library Award for 2025



standards in providing vital resources and programming.

Merrily Cannon, Library Development Program Manager for USL, emphasized the significance of the award, noting that recipients exhibit "a commitment to serving patrons and enhancing the quality of life in their communities." Highland City Library staff are thrilled to accept this designation, which validates their efforts to serve everyone in our community.

"Receiving the Quality Library Award again is a direct reflection of the dedication of our staff and the active participation of our Highland City patrons," said Karen Liu, Library Director. "We are focused on using every resource to provide world-class library services, ensuring we are a vital hub for connection, learning, and fun for everyone—from our newest baby story time attendees to our beloved senior citizens and older adults."

We thank the Utah State Library Division for this honor and invite every resident of Highland City to visit the library, explore our extensive collection, and participate in the award-winning programs that make our library a quality institution.

Upcoming Events

12/1 -12/11: Regular programs will be held during the first two weeks of December

12/4: No programs

12/11: Tween Club and Teen Board Christmas Party at 4:00 p.m.

12/12: Highland Social Hub (HSH) Celebration at 11:00 a.m. for senior citizens and older adults, with guest speaker Mayor Kurt Ostler

12/19: HSH - Scottish Dance and Movement Class with Pam and Barry Smith at 11:00 a.m.

12/24 and 12/25: Closed for Christmas

Highland City Library is proud to announce that it has once again been designated a Quality Library by Utah's State Library Division (USL) for the 2025 fiscal year. This marks a consecutive achievement for our library, which continues to demonstrate exemplary standards in service, community commitment, and enhancing the quality of life for all residents of Highland City.

The Quality Library Award is the highest recognition a Utah public library can receive, acknowledging libraries that exceed state