

Special Meeting Minutes of the Town Board of Commissioners Meeting of May 23, 2012 at the Highlands Police Meeting Room, 372 Oak Street, Highlands, North Carolina.

Town Board Present: Mayor David Wilkes, Commissioner Gary Drake, Commissioner John Dotson, Commissioner Amy Patterson, and Commissioner Eric Pierson.

Absent, Commissioner Brian Stiehler

Town Staff Present: Town Manager Robert Frye, Town Attorney William Coward.

Highlands Playhouse Board Present: Scott Allbee, Dwight Bryant, Steve Day, Wanda Drake, and Curtis Rich.

Play House Staff Present: D.V. Caitlyn

1. Meeting Called to Order

Mayor David Wilkes called the Town Board into session at 5:30 p.m.

2. Discussion

Mayor Wilkes opened the meeting by stating that the purpose for bringing both boards together was to discuss a need for a new lease for the Play House building and to help both boards better understand each other.

Scott Allbee; President of the Play House Board, suggested that a good place to begin would be with an overview of the Play House's operations during their 4 month season.

Both Board's agreed and D.V. Caitlyn; Play House Artistic Director, gave a brief overview of how time was spent before, during and after a production.

Steve Day then mentioned that the Play House Board was working on developing a 3-5 year business plan that would; he hoped, satisfy the Town's concerns regarding the continued operation of the Play House.

Discussion then switched to building availability during the "off season." Commissioner Patterson stated that due the fact that the Play House was a town owned building and was receiving public funds, she was of the opinion that it should be open and available to other groups who wish to utilize the building during the Play House Theater Groups' "off season."

Various members of the Play House Board expressed a willingness to allow the use of the building by other groups, but had serious concerns about the security of sensitive documents stored in the building and that the sound and lighting equipment which is owned by the Play House Theater Group; not be damaged by other users of the building.

Discussion then moved to determining what type of lease agreement should be implemented. Commissioner Patterson again emphasized her belief that the new lease should state that the building be open to use by other entities when the building was not in use by the Play House Theater Group.

Commissioner Dotson stated that he felt that a more appropriate form of lease might be a more traditional type of landlord/tenant form of lease. Commissioner Dotson stated that such a lease would place the burden of operating the building on the Play House Group and as long as they were able to pay the agreed upon amount of monthly rent to the Town, the Play House Group would be free to use the building as they saw fit.

Commissioner Drake stated that we needed to remember that the \$100,000.00 donation from the Winkler’s was donated to the Highlands Playhouse Board to be used for winterization of the building. It wasn’t given to the building or to the Town, but to the Playhouse Board to expand their season.

Both groups then concluded the meeting by agreeing to proceed with working out the details of a new lease and to meet again at a later date to discuss the new lease.

2. Adjournment

As there were no further matters to come before the Board of Commissioners, Commissioner Drake moved to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Pierson and upon unanimous vote, the Town Board adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

David Wilkes
Mayor

Robert A. Frye Jr.
Town Manager