

Regular Meeting Minutes of the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners Meeting of October 17, 2019 at the Highlands Community Building, 71 Poplar Street, Highlands, North Carolina

Town Board Present: Commissioner John Dotson, Commissioner Amy Patterson, Mayor Pro Tempore Brian Stiehler, Commissioner Eric Pierson and Mayor Pat Taylor

Town Board Absent: Commissioner Donnie Calloway

Also Present: Town Manager Josh Ward, Town Attorney Jay Coward, Finance Director Rebecca Shuler, Public Works Director Lamar Nix, Police Chief Bill Harrell, Parks & Recreation Director Lester Norris, Planning & Development Director Assistant Michael Mathis, Computer Support Specialist Mark Hall and Town Clerk Gibby Shaheen

1. Meeting Called to Order

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Public Comment Period

There were no comments.

3. Adjust and Approve the Agenda

MAYOR PRO TEMPORE STIEHLER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PATTERSON AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

4. Approval of the September 19th, 2019, Regular Meeting Minutes

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 19TH, 2019, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEMPORE STIEHLER AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

5. Reports

A. Mayor

Mayor Taylor discussed his letter regarding increase in truck size in legislature and its effect on Western North Carolina, and Commissioner Patterson asked several questions and then suggested he sent one personally and not on behalf of the Board and he agreed.

Mayor Taylor announced his coffee Friday at 11:00am with all you want to know about Broadband with Matt and staff. Mayor Taylor also encouraged everyone to vote.

Mayor Taylor thanked Wildcat Cliffs Country Club for hosting the Scholarship Golf Tournament, Commissioner Stiehler for his leadership, Commissioner Calloway for his support and Finance Director Rebecca Shuler for her administrative work in making it a success.

B. Commissioners and Committee Reports

Mayor Pro Tempore Stiehler reported it was a cold start to a beautiful day with another successful Scholarship Golf Tournament raising just shy of \$19,000. Mayor Pro Tempore Stiehler thanked Finance Director Rebecca Shuler for all of her hard work and help making the tournament such a success.

Mayor Pro Tempore Stiehler reported the TEC meeting was Friday and it was discussing occupancy tax and the benefits to the town.

Mayor Pro Tempore Stiehler expressed appreciation to Mayor Taylor for getting the NC DOT over to look at the intersection of NC106 and Arnold Road.

Commissioner Dotson reported that the Land Use Committee met regarding short term rental and it was open for public comment and discussed were the pros and cons and all

in between. The public comment opened an ongoing conversation that will produce suggestions to the Mayor by April.

C. Town Manager

Town Manager Ward Congratulated Finance Director Rebecca Shuler for completing the Finance Certification which concluded with her passing 4 tests.

Town Manager Ward reported that the paving on Cullasaja Drive and Oak Lane was complete and Hickory Hill will be finished the first of the week. Town Manager Ward reported that the new Water Tank project was complete and the old tank is demoed and the landscaping complete. Sagee Water Line was complete.

6. Consent Agenda

Public Works Department
Police Department
Parks & Recreation Department
Planning & Development Department
Treasurer's Report
Chamber Street Closure Requests

To The Town of Highlands

RE: Halloween 2019 – Street Closures & Police Support

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce will be sponsoring a Halloween event on October 31, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. The event takes place on Main Street between 2nd and 5th streets and 4th Street South from Main Street to Spring Street and 4th Street North from Main Street to Oak Street.

The Chamber is requesting these roads be closed for the event with closure starting at 5:30 p.m. and re-opening at 8:00 p.m. and that police support be provided.

If you have any questions, please contact Beverly Wichman at the Highlands Chamber of Commerce.

Thank you for your consideration.

Beverly Wichman
Events & Volunteer Manager
Highlands Chamber of Commerce
828-526-2112
visitor@highlandschamber.org
To The Town of Highlands

RE: Christmas Tree Lighting – Street Closure & Police Support

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce will be sponsoring a Tree Lighting event on November 30, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. The event takes place on Pine Street between 4th and 5th Streets.

The Chamber is requesting this road be closed for the event with closure starting at 5:30 p.m. and re-opening at 9:00 p.m. and that police support be provided.

If you have any questions, please contact Beverly Wichman at the Highlands Chamber of Commerce.

Thank you for your consideration.

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To The Town of Highlands

RE: Christmas Parade – Street Closure & Police Support

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce will be sponsoring a Christmas Parade on December 7, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. The event takes place on Main Street from Leonard Road to 2nd Street.

The Chamber is requesting that Main Street be closed for the event with closure starting at 10:30 a.m. and re-opening at 12:00 noon and that police support be provided.

If you have any questions, please contact Beverly Wichman at the Highlands Chamber of Commerce.

Thank you for your consideration.

Beverly Wichman
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COMMISSIONER PATTERSON MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DOTSON AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

7. Bear Initiative Presentation/ B. E. A. R. Task Force Update

Mayor Taylor thanked the Board for making Town a better Bear Wise community and introduced Wildlife Resource Justin McVay and Ashley Hobbs to give the presentation.

Hobbs gave the presentation and explained what it meant to become a Bear Wise community and the steps that needed to be taken to accomplish that. Drafting a purpose and have a committee to process and work the force would be needed to proceed. The Board agreed to appoint Mayor Pro Tempore Stiehler to act as the Board's liaison with the Bear Task Force.

8. Request to Change Timing of Town Clock Tower Bell

Sabrina Hawkins stated the bells were lovely and asked if there was a reason that they began ringing at 7:00am. Her guests are here on vacation and some don't want to be awoken that early, is there a way to change it.

Town Manager Ward said there was no reason found for the choice in time and it could be changed to begin at 8:00am.

9. Request to Review Internally Illuminated Sign Regulations Unified Development Ordinance, Section 13.3.11

Jack Austin and Amanda Sullivan representing Old Edwards Inn requested a review of the sign ordinance. The current ordinance makes the backlit signage through a cutout a violation and would like it to have exceptions to include new technology. Our sign is discreet and would appreciate the Board reviewing the ordinance.

COMMISSIONER PIERSON MADE A MOTION TO HAVE THE PLANNING BOARD REVIEW THE ORDINANCE, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PATTERSON AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

10. Taxi Licenses Application Review

Julie Tillery requested approval of Business Application for Taxi service with a retired 1967 London taxi cab for her private club and for hire. The car will be stored on Spring Street and mobile during the day.

MAYOR PRO TEMPORE STIEHLER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE TAXI LICENSE APPLICATION AS PRESENTED, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PATTERSON AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

11. NC DOT Road Update

Mayor Taylor updated with the ideas discussed with the NC DOT which included the following:

- Arnold Road -private and needed to be cutback to increase visibility
- Sidewalks into town on NC Hwy106 and US64
- Warning lights installed and working on the Gorge Road US64
- Intersection of NC28, South Street and Satulah Road if changed would be a town project with NC DOT engineers giving a permit to approve the joining of Satulah Road and South Street to have one stop sign onto NC28
- Big Bear Pen paving – crowded and erosion problem – right of way issues with two owners
- Culvert at Trillium and Horse Cove – opening up bridge would be a quick process

Commissioner Patterson expressed a concern of the pedestrian crossing waiting area on Bryson's corner 4th and Main to look at before re-surfacing for safety reasons.

12. Adjournment

As there were no further matters to come before the Board of Commissioners, Commissioner Pierson moved to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner Dotson and upon a unanimous vote, the Town Board adjourned at 8:40pm.

Patrick Taylor
Mayor

Gilberta B. Shaheen
Town Clerk