

Special Meeting Minutes of the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners Meeting of November 3, 2020, via Zoom, Highlands, North Carolina

Town Board Present: Commissioner John Dotson, Commissioner Amy Patterson, Mayor Pro Tempore Donnie Calloway, Commissioner Brian Stiehler, Commissioner Marc Hehn and Mayor Pat Taylor

Also Present: Town Manager Josh Ward, Town Attorney Jay Coward, Finance Director Rebecca Shuler, MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler and Town Clerk Gibby Shaheen

1. Meeting Called to Order

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

2. Review Broadband Proposals

MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler gave an overview of the companies that had submitted proposals for the Smart Cities Project.



Agenda Item Review Smart Cities Project Proposals

On Monday Oct. 26th at 3pm, the Town received 3 proposals in response to The Town of Highlands Smart Cities Project RFP. All proposals were deemed responsive. A small summary of each proposal is outlined below and each proposal is included. Each heading is a link to the proposal.

North Carolina Broadband Group

- Will begin connecting customers within 90 days of contract adoption.
- Will build remaining 13% Fall 2021.
- Services Internet up to 1Gbps, Plan to have VoIP phone service.
- Will offer Town \$3,650,000 over 25 years.
- Will offer an Open Network

BalsamWest

- Will begin connecting customers in 6 months after contract adoption
- Good Faith Effort to build out 17%.
- Services: Internet Up to 1 Gbps (residential), Voice, Transport, Data Center Services
- Will offer Town \$5,390,000 over 25 years

Hotwire

- Will begin connecting customers 3 months after connection of upstream bandwidth
- Will build underground in 3 years with customer commitment
- Services Offered: Internet Up to 10 (residential) Gbps, Voice, Television, Home Automation, Home Security
- Will offer Town \$10,200,000 over 25 years

Commissioner Patterson asked some questions to make clarifications.

Mayor Taylor reminded the Board that this was a preliminary meeting to begin discussion and decide the procedures it would like to follow.

Commissioner Hehn suggested the Board interview the companies, request financial documents to prove the company's sustainability and rank them. Commissioner Hehn also asked staff to define if the interest rates will change by this transaction.

Finance Director Rebecca Shuler said she had already been in contact with the lender and was awaiting a response.

Discussion was held then Mayor Taylor reviewed the planned procedure of the Board to interview and rank the companies with the expectation of financials, along with the active attorneys via Zoom. The Board agreed and consented for MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler to be in contact and schedule the interviews for next week.

3. Adjournment

AS THERE WERE NO FURTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, MAYOR PRO TEMPORE CALLOWAY MOVED TO ADJOURN WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STIEHLER AND UPON A UNANIMOUS VOTE, THE TOWN BOARD ADJOURNED AT 7:35PM.

Patrick Taylor
Mayor

Gilberta B. Shaheen
Town Clerk