

Special Meeting Minutes of the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners Meeting of May 5, 2022, at the Highlands Community Building, 71 Poplar Street, Highlands, North Carolina

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

Town Board Absent: Commissioner Eric Pierson

Also Present: Town Manager Josh Ward, Finance Director Rebecca Shuler, Public Works Director Lamar Nix, MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler, Police Chief Andrea Holland, Parks & Recreation Director Lester Norris, Human Resource Director Emilie Nickerson and Town Clerk Gibby Shaheen

1. Meeting Called to Order

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 3:03pm.

2. Adjust and Approve the Agenda

Town Manager Josh Ward asked to add #4 Budget Amendments for a replacement of the HVAC upstairs at Town Hall and the removal of asbestos from the Houston House.

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

3. Approval of Scholarship Awards

Page 1 of 3

COWARD HICKS & SILER
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
705 WEST MAIN STREET
SYLVA, NORTH CAROLINA 28779
(828) 586-2147
FAX: (828) 586-2605
Website: www.cowardhicksandsiler.com

ORVILLE D. COWARD, JR.
J.K. COWARD, JR.
KIMBERLY R. COWARD
EMILY MONTOYA

* BOARD CERTIFIED SPECIALIST IN RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE
*BOARD CERTIFIED SPECIALIST IN FAMILY LAW

JAMES KENT COWARD 1929-1989
RALPH HICKS 1924-2011
ORVILLE D. COWARD 1925-2016
ROBERT F. SILER (OF COUNSEL)

OFFICES IN:
SYLVA, NORTH CAROLINA
FRANKLIN, NORTH CAROLINA
CASHIERS, NORTH CAROLINA

Wednesday, May 4, 2022

Honorable Patrick Taylor, Mayor
Town of Highlands
mayor@highlands.org

Re: Town of Highlands Scholarship Committee

Dear Mr. Taylor,

The Town of Highlands Scholarship Committee has had the opportunity to consider all the applications, and it is my privilege to inform you of the Scholarship Committee's recommendations. We are again pleased with the large number of applicants this year.

The Scholarship Committee is recommending the amount of \$52,500.00 be awarded as scholarships in 2022, as follows:

Graduating High School Seniors	Amount
Olvera, Jeffrey (Valedictorian)	\$ 3,300.00
Borino, Hayley (Salutatorian)	\$ 2,800.00
Moss, Brandon	\$ 2,000.00
Coen, Madalynne	\$ 2,000.00
Doerter, Kaitlyn	\$ 2,000.00
Minton, Emma	\$ 2,000.00
Branham, Bella	\$ 2,000.00
Ortiz, Frances	\$ 1,750.00
Rickert, Tayler	\$ 1,750.00
Ingate, Davis	\$ 1,750.00
Webb, Madison	\$ 1,500.00

COWARD HICKS & SILER

J.K. Coward Jr, Attorney at Law jkeoward@chspa.com
Emily Montoya, Attorney at Law emontoya@chspa.com

Schmitt, Julia	\$ 1,500.00
Schmitt, Ava	\$ 1,500.00
Staffelbach, Seth	\$ 1,250.00
Hernandez, Ruth	\$ 1,250.00
Chidsey, Olivia	\$ 1,250.00
Schmitt, Reece	\$ 1,000.00
Nastasic, Cody	\$ 1,000.00
Hernandez, Dayana	\$ 750.00
Gibson, Colton	\$ 750.00
Small, Hayley	\$ 750.00
SUBTOTAL	\$ 33,850.00

College Applicants/Renewals	Amount
Woods, Patrick	\$ 1,600.00
Templeton, Hadley	\$ 1,600.00
Nichols, Abigail	\$ 1,350.00
Olvera, Morgan	\$ 1,350.00
Roman, Sayla	\$ 1,350.00
Gates, Ronald	\$ 1,100.00
Houston, Brooklyn	\$ 1,100.00
Preda, Alexandria	\$ 1,100.00
Moore, Anne	\$ 1,100.00
Rehmeier, Megan	\$ 1,000.00
Crowe, Grace	\$ 1,000.00
Drummonds, Madelyn	\$ 1,000.00
Weller, Emma	\$ 1,000.00
Olvera, Abigail	\$ 750.00
Valerio, Marilyn	\$ 750.00
Shearl, William	\$ 750.00
Tate, James	\$ 750.00
SUBTOTAL	\$ 18,650.00

TOTAL	\$ 52,500.00
-------	--------------

COWARD HICKS & SILER

J.K. Coward Jr, Attorney at Law jkcoward@chspa.com
Emily Montoya, Attorney at Law emontoya@chspa.com

Page 3 of 3

I appreciate the opportunity to serve and work with the Scholarship Committee and thank each of them for their willingness to serve and support our students.

Sincerely,



J. K. Coward, Jr.

cc: Jeff Weller (jeff@summitarchitecturepa.com)
Hilary Wilkes (hilary@highlandhiker.com)
Brian Hetter (brian.jetter@macon.12.nc.us)
Caleb Bowers (calebbowers@gmail.com)
Josh Ward (josh.ward@highlandsnc.org)

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

**4. Budget Amendments: Upper HVAC at Town Hall
Houston House Asbestos Removal**

Town Manager Josh Ward explained the HVAC unit upstairs at Town Hall went out and needed to be replaced and presented the Budget Amendment for \$10,000. Ward continued that before the Houston house can be demolished by our crews, Mountain Environmental would need to remove the asbestos and presented the Budget Amendment for \$5,500.

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS BUDGET AMENDMENT
AMENDMENT # _____

May 5, 2022



THE TOWN OF
HIGHLANDS

FROM: General Fund

DEPARTMENT: Public Buildings

EXPLANATION: Upper HVAC

Account	Description	Increase/Decrease	Debit	Credit
1. 10-3000-0090	Zoning Certificates	Increase		\$7,500.00
10-5700-1500	Maintenance & Repair ~ TH	Decrease		\$2,500.00
10-5700-7300	Capital Outlay/Buildings	Increase	\$10,000.00	
		Subtotals	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
		Totals	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00

Approved by Town Manager _____

Action by Town Board _____

Approved and Entered on Minutes Dated _____

Finance Director _____

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS BUDGET AMENDMENT
AMENDMENT # _____

May 5, 2022



THE TOWN OF
HIGHLANDS

FROM: General Fund

DEPARTMENT: Parks & Recreation

EXPLANATION: Asbestos Removal

Account	Description	Increase/Decrease	Debit	Credit
1. 10-3350-0170	Nautilus – Rec Park	Increase		\$5,500.00
10-6200-7300	Capital Outlay/Other	Increase	\$5,500.00	
		Subtotals	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00
		Totals	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00

Approved by Town Manager _____

Action by Town Board _____

Approved and Entered on Minutes Dated _____

Finance Director _____

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE BUDGET AMENDMENTS AS PRESENTED, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STIEHLER AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

5. Electric Rate Increase Discussion

Town Manager Josh Ward reported the Finance Committee had met and discussed the increase in electric rates as advised by Nova Energy Consultant Kevin O'Donnell. Ward explained that last fiscal year there was the true-up and account issues refund from Duke that resulted in a refund of \$735,000, which was put in a separate Reserve account in case there was a rate increase and recommended no increase at this time in electric rates, but to use this money and re-evaluate later in the year, the Board agreed.

6. Employee Salary Discussion

Town Manager Josh Ward said that staff and the Finance Committee had reviewed salaries and they had brought 2 full-time employees up to a \$15.00 per hour rate and calculated the recommended 6% cola for employees for FY2022-23, and the Board agreed.

7. Review Preliminary FY 2022-23 Revenues, Expenditures & Capital Projects

FY 2022-23 Capital Items List

Street Department

Street Paving

Oak Street (1 st to 3 rd)	\$134,000.00
1 st Street	\$20,000.00
Cook Road	\$31,000.00
Bruner Lane	\$23,000.00
Lucerne Drive (top)	\$12,000.00
Talley Road / Lane	\$50,000.00
<u>Currently Unpaved</u>	
Old Walhalla Road	\$47,000.00
Cullasaja Drive Extension	\$52,000.00

Sub Total **\$369,000.00**

Repairs / Maintenance

Sidewalks

Oak & 1 st Streets	\$154,000.00
US 64 (Pinecrest to 4 th Street Cottages)	\$50,000.00
3 rd Street Elevated Sidewalk	\$61,000.00
(3) Tree Planter Replacements at Reeves	\$17,000.00

Sub Total **\$282,000.00**

Equipment

Replace Motor Grader	\$265,000.00
Snow Plow / Spreader	\$25,000.00

Sub Total **\$290,000.00**

Total **\$941,000.00**

Sanitation Department

Equipment

Compact Rear Loader Truck	\$135,000.00
Dumpsters	\$30,000.00

Total **\$165,000.00**

Electric Department

Equipment

Replace 2009 International / Altec Bucket Truck \$251,000.00
Gibson Street Electric Project \$59,000.00

Total **\$310,000.00**

Water / Sewer Department

Gibson Street Water / Sewer / Electric \$608,000.00
Replacement of Carolina Way Sewer Line \$222,000.00
Water Meter Replacement Replacement \$380,500.00
Water Booster Pump Generators:
• Moorewood \$136,000.00
• Ravenel \$80,000.00
• Satulah \$136,000.00
• Holt Knob \$47,000.00
• Brushy Face \$35,000.00
Sewer Pump Station Generator Replacement \$41,000.00

Subtotal **\$1,685,500.00**

Water Treatment Plant

Service Contracts (Idexx, Tholen, Covington, Heyward, Patton) \$25,000.00
Clean Decant Tanks \$50,000.00
Pump Rebuilds \$50,000.00
Rock Trap Repair / Services \$2,600.00
Chemical Mixers \$8,000.00
Replacement Equipment (DR 3900, CL17) \$8,000.00
Misc. Tools/Equipment \$4,000.00

Subtotal **\$147,600.00**

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Belt Press Replacement / Process Improvements \$900,000.00
Tank Cleaning \$65,000.00
Pump Station Parts \$60,000.00

Subtotal **\$1,025,000.00**

Total **\$2,858,100.00**

Police Department

(2) Replacement Patrol Vehicles \$84,000.00
(2) Sets of Equipment \$26,000.00
17 Panasonic Body worn Cameras with accessories \$29,500.00
Shed for Emergency Response Truck & RTV \$25,000.00

Total **\$164,500.00**

Parks & Recreation Department

Projects

Installation of Ice/Snow Guards on Civic Center Roof \$25,000.00

Total **\$25,000.00**

MIS/GIS Department

Big Bear Pen & Little Bear Pen Upgrades to Scada \$48,000.00

Server Upgrade \$17,000.00

Total **\$65,000.00**

	Proposed FY 2022-23	FY 2021-22
General Fund Departments	\$1,195,500.00	\$1,638,000.00
Water/Sewer Fund	\$2,858,100.00	\$1,818,000.00
Electric Fund	\$310,000.00	\$368,000.00
Sanitation Fund	\$165,000.00	\$125,000.00
<u>Grand Total</u>	<u>\$4,528,600.00</u>	<u>\$3,949,000.00</u>

8. Adjournment

AS THERE WERE NO FURTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, MAYOR PRO TEMPORE DOTSON MOVED TO ADJOURN WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STIEHLER AND UPON A UNANIMOUS VOTE, THE TOWN BOARD ADJOURNED AT 5:00PM.

Patrick Taylor
Mayor

Gilberta B. Shaheen
Town Clerk