

Minutes of January 21, 2009

REGULAR BOARD MEETING of January 21, 2009

Present: Mayor Don Mullen, Commissioners Hank Ross, Dennis DeWolf, John Dotson, Larry Rogers

Absent: Commissioner Amy Patterson

Staff Present: Town Manager Jim Fatland, Town Engineer Lamar Nix and Town Planner Joe Cooley

I. Call to Order.

Mayor Mullen called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

II. Approval of Agenda

Copies of the agenda along with back-up material was provided to the Board prior to the meeting. The agenda was approved by consensus.

III. Approval of Minutes

On motion by DeWolf and seconded by Ross, the minutes of January 7, 2009 were approved unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Period

The Mayor called for public comments. Hillrie Quinn, Chairman of the Greenway Committee thanked Commissioner DeWolf for his volunteer efforts this week on cutting trail. Quinn reported that Greenway volunteers were working two days this week on trail clearing, and despite the cold weather had ten volunteers.

V. Reports

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The Mayor discussed the Council Retreat that will be held next week on January 29. He reported that he, Town Manager Fatland and Administrator Betz would be meeting the facilitator on Monday January 26 to work on the proposed agenda. The Mayor solicited ideas from Commissioners. The Mayor announced that the County would be hosting a planning retreat on January 30 and requested Commissioners to attend.

The Town Manager reported that he attended the Highlands ABC Board meeting prior to the Town Council meeting. He reported that the ABC Board was moving forward with plans on relocation. The Town Manager said that he will be meeting next week with Town Attorney Bill Coward. Fatland also reported that the proposed State PARTF Grant Application to expand the ball field was delayed until next year because the adjacent property owner was not ready to proceed at this time.

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VI. Old Business

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1. Bridge Replacement at Recreation Park. Town Manager Fatland called upon Engineer Lamar Nix to discuss the proposed bridge replacement. Nix reported that the existing bridge over Mill Creek on the Greenway Trail at Highlands Recreation Park is need of repair and presents a safety risk. The existing structure is over twenty (20) years old and is long overdue for replacement. The proposed structure will

accommodate the Highlands Plateau Greenway Committee request to support their Yanmar which weighs 3,874 pounds and 4 foot width. Nix recommended to replace the bridge with a 40 foot structure of corten steel with a 3 inch by 8 inch pressure treated wooden deck. The work will be completed by Town of Highlands employees and a local concrete contractor. The estimated cost for material is \$20,000. Funds are available in the Greenway Project Fund. Nix said that the project could start within 1 ½ months. Hillrie Quinn addressed the Board and supported staff recommendation. He felt that the replacement will be less prone to vandalism than the existing bridge. Commissioner Dotson questioned if other options were reviewed. Nix stated that staff looked at replacing the bridge within the original specifications at an estimated cost of \$10,000 to \$12,000. After further discussion, Motion was made by Commissioner Ross and seconded by Commissioner Rogers to approve staff recommendation of a 40 foot structure of corten steel. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Greenway Brochure. Greenway Committee Chairman Quinn requested approval to spend up to \$900 for a new brochure. Quinn reported that the new brochure will not only provide a map but also distances to aid visitors to the trail system. On motion by Commissioner Ross and seconded by Commissioner DeWolf, the motion passed unanimously to spend up to \$900 for a new brochure. Funds are included in the Greenway Project Budget.

VII. New Business

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1. Resolutions Authorizing Applications for Federal Funds. Town Manager Fatland reported to the Town Board that staff has evaluated several projects that could meet the criteria requirement for President Obama's Federal Stimulus Package. One of the elements of the stimulus plan is that projects must be within 120 days of construction. Fatland reported that the Town has identified six projects which included the following: Dredging the Big Creek Arm of Lake Sequoyah; Emergency Generators for Water Pumping Stations; Radio Read Meters for Electric and Water; Sewer Lines for Lake Sequoyah and Mirror Lake; Big Bear Pen Water Replacement Line and Police Station Renovation of the former Highlands ABC Store.

Fatland presented a Resolution to seek Federal Funding for Lake Sequoyah Dredging. The estimated project cost is \$2,000,000, requesting a Federal Grant for \$1,500,000 with the remaining \$500,000 funded by the Town. Commissioner Dotson suggested that the Town seek full funding from Federal Funds. Fatland pointed out that the stimulus package will more than likely be funded through existing Federal agencies. In this case, the Army Corps of Engineers has a program that funds 75% of project costs. In the past funds have not been available. Fatland also reported that the Town has accumulated \$300,000 to date for local funds for dredging. The Town Board approved \$150,000 per year commencing in FY08. Fatland emphasized the Town project may be looked upon more favorable if local match was provided. On motion made by Commissioner DeWolf and seconded by Commissioner Rogers, the Resolution seeking Federal funds for Lake Sequoyah dredging was passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL FUNDING LAKE SEQUOYAH DREDGING HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, Altamont Environmental, Inc., Consultant for the Town of Highlands, NC, has completed a Sedimentation Evaluation and Repair Estimate for the Big Creek Arm of Lake Sequoyah on March 11, 2008 and;

WHEREAS, the Sedimentation Evaluation and Repair Estimate Report completed the following tasks: mapped sediment in the Big Creek arm of Lake Sequoyah; collected sediment samples and analyzed pesticides and metals; developed sediment removal and disposal options, based upon sediment distribution mapping; met or corresponded with North Carolina Department of Natural Resources, US Army Corps of Engineers, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Department, and US Fish & Wildlife Service to discuss the regulatory perspective on each option; described the relative strengths and weaknesses of implementing each option; recommended the preferred option, based on minimizing environmental impacts and costs; provided order-of-magnitude cost estimates, based on sediment distribution and probable project elements; and prepared figures showing sediment distribution; and

WHEREAS, the report identified four options with hydraulic dredging with onsite dewatering and transport of dredged material as the preferred option; and

WHEREAS, the estimated cost for the preferred option is \$2,000,000; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners has established a “Lake Remediation Reserve” in FY2008, agreeing to make annual deposits of \$150,000 commencing in FY08; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Highlands is ready to start construction project pending additional funding; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town of Highlands, NC Board of Commissioners hereby request Federal Funding in the amount of \$1,500,000 or 75% for Lake Sequoyah Dredging and further agrees to commit \$500,000 or 25% in local funds for the estimated \$2,000,000 project cost.

ADOPTED THIS 21ST DAY OF JANUARY 2009

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

MAYOR

TOWN CLERK

Fatland presented a Resolution Authorizing Application for Federal Funding for Emergency Generators for Water Pumping Stations. Engineer Nix stated that there are six water pumping stations without emergency generators. The estimated cost is \$208,000. Commissioner Dotson asked if this project would be bid out if funds became available. Fatland reported yes and further added Engineer Nix obtained estimates back in July 2008 to aid in budget preparation. On motion by Commissioner DeWolf and seconded by Commissioner Ross, the Resolution seeking Federal funds for emergency generators was passed unanimously.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION
FOR FEDERAL FUNDING
EMERGENCY GENERATORS FOR WATER PUMPING STATIONS
HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA**

WHEREAS, the Town of Highlands has obtained cost estimates for emergency generators for Little Bear Pen Water Pumping Station, HCC Moorewood Circle Water Pumping Station, Satulah Water Pumping Station, HCC Tower Site Pumping Station, Revenel Water Pumping Station, and Holt Knob Water Pumping Station,

WHEREAS, the total estimated cost for emergency generators for the water pumping stations is \$208,000; and

WHEREAS, the time frame for the purchase and installation is approximately two (2) months; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners hereby request Federal Funding in the amount of \$156,000 or 75% of the project costs and further agrees to commit \$52,000 or 25% in local funds for the estimated \$208,000 project cost.

ADOPTED THIS 21ST DAY OF JANUARY 2009.

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

MAYOR

TOWN CLERK

Fatland presented a Resolution Authorizing Application for Federal Funding for Big Bear Pen Water Improvement Project. Engineer Nix stated that the existing water lines are shallow and freeze in extremely cold weather thus interrupting service to residences in the area and do not provide sufficient flow for fire protection. The estimated cost for the water line replacement and upgrade is \$195,000. Nix added that this project is within the 120-day requirement to be bid. On motion made by Commissioner Ross and seconded by Commissioner Rogers, the Resolution seeking Federal funds for Big Bear Pen Water Improvement Project was passed unanimously.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION
FOR FEDERAL FUNDING
BIG BEAR PEN WATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA**

WHEREAS, the Town of Highlands has obtained cost estimates for upgrading the existing water system on Center Drive and Margaret’s Lane of Big Bear Pen; and

WHEREAS, the existing water lines are shallow and freeze in extremely cold weather thus interrupting service to residences in the area and do not provide sufficient flow for fire protection; and

WHEREAS, the total estimated cost for the water line upgrade is \$195,000; and

WHEREAS, the project is under design and will be ready to advertise for construction bids within 120 days; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners hereby request Federal Funding in the amount of \$146,250 or 75% of the project costs and further agrees to commit \$48,750 or 25% in local funds for the estimated \$195,000 project cost.

ADOPTED THIS 21ST DAY OF JANUARY 2009.

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

MAYOR

TOWN CLERK

Town Manager Fatland reported that staff is in the process of obtaining estimates for radio read electric

and water meters, police renovation of the former ABC Store and sewer lines for Lake Sequoyah and Mirror Lake. In addition Fatland reported that he and Engineer Nix would like to discuss the design cost for the sewer lines at the upcoming retreat and they would be meeting with an engineer consultant tomorrow. The Board discussed the importance of the sewer project and questioned if right of way would be needed for this project. Nix responded that right of way would be necessary for at least two locations for pumping facilities. Nix also presented estimates totaling \$9.4 million. Seeing no further action at this time on Federal funding requests, the Mayor moved to the next item under new business.

2. Police Department Grant Applications. Town Manager Fatland reported that the Highlands Police Department is requesting Town Council approval to submit three (3) grant applications. The first grant application is with the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program to acquire a speed trailer to ensure compliance with speed limits. The cost for the speed trailer is \$8,160. The Federal Grant is \$6,120 (75%) and local cost is \$2,040 (25%). The second grant application is with Governor's Crime Commission to purchase modern equipment to obtain finger prints from crime scenes. The equipment is needed to extrapolate evidence beyond latent powder lifts. The cost for the equipment and supplies is \$5,190. The Federal Grant is \$3,892.50 (75%) and the local cost is \$1,297.50 (25%). The third grant application is with Governor's Crime Commission to purchase a RUVIS KRIMSITE Imager. The cost for the equipment is \$18,950.00. The Federal Grant is \$14,212.50 (75%) and the local cost is \$4,737.50 (25%). Fatland stated the local cost for all three grants is \$8,075 and funds are available in the FY09 Police Department Budget. On motion by Commissioner DeWolf and seconded by Commissioner Ross the motion passed with Commissioner Dotson voting "No".
3. Other Business. Mayor Mullen reported that he has received several complaints on inadequate clearing of state highways by NCDOT. The Mayor pointed out that Hwy 64 between Highlands and Cashiers was extremely bad. He questioned why Hwy 64 in Jackson County was in excellent shape while the portion in Macon County was not. The Mayor reported that he shared these comments with NCDOT. Town Engineer Nix reported that the cost of salt has skyrocketed this year. The cost is almost three times as high from last year. Commissioner Dotson questioned if brine could be used instead of salt. Nix said this product is more expensive and is used primarily by NCDOT on bridges and overpasses.

VIII. Motion to Adjourn

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The Mayor called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 P.M. Motion made by Commissioner DeWolf to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.