

**Regular Meeting Minutes of the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners Meeting of February 18, 2021, via Zoom, Highlands, North Carolina**

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

Also Present: Town Manager Josh Ward, Town Attorney Jay Coward, Public Works Director Lamar Nix, Police Chief Andrea Holland, Officer Mike Jolly, Parks & Recreation Director Lester Norris, Planning & Development Director Assistant Michael Mathis and Town Clerk Gibby Shaheen

**1. Meeting Called to Order**

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

**2. Public Comment Period**

Susan Rowell and husband from Alabama had purchased a lot on Mill Creek Lane and have already met with Josh Ward regarding variance request and wanted to listen to the meeting and introduce herself.

Betsy Bird of 555 Arnold Road, the recently annexed property, thanked the Board for the acceptance into the Town.

**3. Adjust and Approve the Agenda**

TOWN MANAGER JOSH WARD ASKED TO ADD CLOSED SESSION TO APPROVE THE CLOSED SESSION MINUTES, AS ADVISED BY TOWN ATTORNEY JAY COWARD. COMMISSIONER STIEHLER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEMPORE PATTERSON AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

**4. Approval of the January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes**

MAYOR PRO TEMPORE PATTERSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2021, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DOTSON AND THE VOTE WAS 3 TO 1 WITH COMMISSIONER HEHN OPPOSING UNANIMOUS, WITH COMMISSIONER CALLOWAY ABSTAINING.

**Approval of the May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Special Meeting Minutes**

MAYOR PRO TEMPORE PATTERSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2017, SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STIEHLER AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS, WITH COMMISSIONER HEHN ABSTAINING.

**Approval of the May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Special Meeting Minutes**

COMMISSIONER STIEHLER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MAY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2017, SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEMPORE PATTERSON AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS, WITH COMMISSIONER HEHN ABSTAINING.

**5. Reports**

**A. Mayor**

Mayor Taylor reported he had been involved with discussions regarding events in Town and the role of the Chamber in these events, and wanted the Business Committee to meet with the Chamber members and exchange thoughts and ideas and would be coordinating it.

Mayor Taylor commended the nonprofit organizations and individuals who worked in the effort to make a successful vaccination event.

## **B. Commissioners and Committee Reports**

There were no commissioner or committee reports.

## **C. Town Manager**

Town Manager Josh Ward reported the refinancing of the Fiber Smart Cities project was approved and closed. The interest rate went from 3.66% to 2.9% which lowered the annual payment. Town Manager Josh Ward continued, that Chowan Drive repair is underway and the DOT had removed the trees, boulder and stump; and the Sewer Plant repairs are underway.

## **6. Consent Agenda**

Public Works Department  
Police Department  
Parks & Recreation Department  
Planning & Development Department  
Treasurer's Report  
Committee Appointments  
Wreaths Across America

### COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Finance Committee: John Dotson, Brian Stiehler and Amy Patterson

Public Works Committee: Donnie Calloway, Marc Hehn and Brian Stiehler

Recreation Committee: Donnie Calloway and Brian Stiehler

Land Use Committee: John Dotson, Amy Patterson and Donnie Calloway

Sustainability and Community Wellness: Amy Patterson Marc Hehn and John Dotson

Scholarship Fund Raising Committee: Patrick Taylor, Donnie Calloway and Brian Stiehler

Business Group: Patrick Taylor, Brian Stiehler and Mark Hehn

Public Safety: John Dotson, Donnie Calloway and Brian Stiehler

BearWise: Amy Patterson, Marc Hehn and Patrick Taylor

IT/Communications Committee: Amy Patterson, Patrick Taylor and John Dotson



To the Town Board, Highlands, NC.

Highlands Wreaths across America is requesting permission to conduct a wreath laying ceremony at Highlands Cemetery on Saturday December 18, 2021.

Highlands Wreaths across America request to use the following town properties;

Highlands Cemetery on Memorial Park Drive on Friday December 17, 2021 for set-up and on Saturday December 18, 2021 for ceremony and wreath laying.

Parking at the Community Building on Poplar Street for participant and volunteer parking on Saturday December 18, 2021. Use of the Community Building on Poplar Street for the ceremony on Saturday December 18, 2021. Approximate times would be 9:00 am till 2:00 pm.

Parking at the Town ball field on Hickory Street for participant and volunteer parking on Saturday December 18, 2021.

Sincerely,

Phillip Potts, Highlands Wreath across America Location Coordinator

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

#### **7. Highlands Motoring Festival Request**

Steve Ham thanked the Board of Commissioners for the opportunity to hold the Highlands Motoring Festival in the past. The request is to close and use Pine Street Park and Fifth Street from 6am - 4pm on Saturday June 12, 2021.

MAYOR PRO TEMPORE PATTERSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REQUEST TO CLOSE PINE STREET AND FIFTH STREET ON SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 2021, AS PRESENTED, CONTINGENT UPON ANY REQUIREMENTS WITH THE COVID PANDEMIC, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STIEHLER AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

#### **8. 5k Road Race Event Request**

Derek Taylor thanked the Board, Fire Department, Recreation Department and Police Department for their support for a successful race last year. Taylor reported each year the race has raised over \$25,000 and this year will be the 7<sup>th</sup> year and want to hold the event before school in August and hoping COVID won't be a factor.

#### **9. Main Street Resurfacing Updates**

Mayor Taylor updated the Board that the NCDOT would begin paving on a block system and will consist of detours and the block areas closed for 24-hours. The process will consist of milling and paving those blocks within that 24-hour time frame.

Public Works Director and Town Engineer Lamar Nix added that the intersection on Highway 28 will re-configured, removing the planters and re-stripping.

Town Manager Josh Ward said the intersections will be milled first and installing the loop timed system so you won't see them and it will be clean. Paving will start the middle of March depending on the weather and the milling will be at night, but the businesses have been advised. The ramps with brail pad that are ADA compliant will be installed in August.

**10. Town Board of Commissioners Code of Conduct**

Town Attorney Jay Coward reviewed the current Code of Conduct and advised it suggests well intentional behavior and means well, but if violated, there were no sanctions code. Coward advised the Code of Conduct be revised to include a violation clause, which would allow the Board to censure the violating member.

**11. In-Person Retreat & Town Board Meeting Discussion**

Discussion was held regarding in-person meetings and consensus to hold the Retreat which is a work session, in person providing access to citizens via Zoom. Town Manager Josh Ward said he would have MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler look at it and work it out.

**12. Closed Session: Pursuant to NCGS §143-318.11(a)(1) Information Made Confidential by Law**

COMMISSIONER CALLOWAY MADE A MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO NCGS §143-318.11(A)(1) INFORMATION MADE CONFIDENTIAL BY LAW AT 8:10PM, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DOTSON AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ONCE DISCUSSION WAS HELD, COMMISSIONER DOTSON MADE A MOTION TO GO BACK INTO OPEN SESSION AT 8:29PM, WHICH WAS SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEMPORE PATTERSON AND THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

**13. Adjournment**

AS THERE WERE NO FURTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, COMMISSIONER STIEHLER MOVED TO ADJOURN WHICH WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DOTSON AND UPON A UNANIMOUS VOTE, THE TOWN BOARD ADJOURNED AT 8:30PM.

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Patrick Taylor  
Mayor

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Gilberta B. Shaheen  
Town Clerk