

REGULAR BOARD MEETING of September 20, 2000, with Mayor Buck Trott and Commissioners Zeke Sossomon, H. N. James, and Mike Cavender present. Comm. Sanders was absent due to illness, and Comm. Patterson was out of Town as reported at the last meeting.

Also present were Richard Betz, Lamar Nix, Kim LeWicki, and Dennis Wilson.

I. Call to Order.

The Mayor called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Agenda.

Copies of the agenda had been distributed by mail. The Clerk requested that two items of new business be added to the agenda:

- Authorization to receive bids on the Fourth Street Sewer Line
- Adoption of a resolution in support of an application by Macon County for a Parks & Recreation Trust Fund Grant.

He also reported that Comm. James had requested that the matter of acquisition of right-of-way along Bowery Road be discussed under old business. Comm. Sossomon felt that this item should be a Closed Session matter pursuant to G. S. §143-318.11(a)(5), in that it involved negotiation for the acquisition of real property.

MOVED BY COMM. SOSSOMON, SECONDED BY COMM. JAMES, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

III. Approval of Minutes.

Copies of the minutes of the September 6 Regular Board Meeting had been distributed by mail.

MOVED BY COMM. CAVENDER, SECONDED BY COMM. JAMES, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS DISTRIBUTED.

IV. Reports.

1. Comm. Cavender reported that the Street Committee had looked at siltation problems along Hickory Hill Road, as discussed at the August 16 meeting. He and Comm. Sossomon had agreed that silt from that road and from Azalea Circle was channelling into Big Creek, forming a peninsula; he felt that the only way to prevent further siltation was to see if the State would be willing to pave at least a portion of Hickory Hill Road. Comm. James felt that the ditches should be paved as well, and the Board agreed that the road should be paved at least as far as the Water Treatment Plant, or perhaps to the top of the hill beyond the Plant. The Town Administrator reported that he had contacted Division Engineer Ron Watson about the road, and had been told that paving would have to come out of Small Urban Funds; Mr. Watson had agreed to see if right-of-way had been obtained for the road. The Board agreed for the Mayor to write a letter to the D. O. T. formally requesting that it consider paving the road.

2. Town Administrator Richard Betz reported that he had been nominated to participate in the Leadership Highlands program sponsored by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce; the cost was \$400, and the program would involve a series of ten sessions from November through next May.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. CAVENDER, AND UNANIMOUSLY

CARRIED TO PERMIT THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM AND PAY THE COST.

The Town Administrator also reported that a request had been made to remove a large oak tree near public right-of-way on the Episcopal Church property. Town Engineer Lamar Nix reported that he had looked at the tree and that it was threatening power lines; he had asked Bill Wykle at the Highlands Biological Center to look at the tree, and Mr. Wykle had said that he felt it would be best to remove the tree because it might be dangerous to people passing by on the sidewalk. He said the Town had helped other churches remove trees in the past.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. CAVENDER, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO HELP REMOVE THE TREE IF THE CHURCH WANTS IT REMOVED.

Mr. Nix said that Mr. Wykle had also identified some dead limbs on an oak tree on the Deville property on Main Street overhanging public right-of-way which he felt needed to be removed, and the Board agreed to remove the dangerous limbs.

The Clerk reminded the Board that bids would be received on the Maple Street and West Shore Lake Sequoyah projects on September 28 at 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Dennis Wilson was present representing the Chamber of Commerce and commented on the need for street lighting on Pine Street which had come to the attention of the Chamber after the recent street dance. The Board agreed for the Street Committee to look at the problem.

V. Old Business.

1. Each Board member had received copies of a proposal from W. K. Dickson engineer Victor Lofquist for preliminary work on the Wastewater Treatment Expansion, pursuant to his March 1, 2000 report; the total amount approved in the budget for Phase I was \$175,000, and the estimated cost of engineering was \$45,000.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. SOSSOMON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL.

VI. New Business.

1. This was the time and location advertized for sealed formal bids to be received on the Highlands Volunteer Fire Department 2000 Addition and Renovation. Only one bid had been received, from Schmitt Building Contractors Inc. The Board agreed to return the bid unopened and re-advertize for October 18.

2. Bids on various Town vehicles and equipment had been publicly opened by the Town Administrator and Public Services Administrator at 1:00 p.m. on September 18 in the Town Administrator's office. The Public Services Administrator had reviewed the bids and reported that all of the vehicles and equipment met specifications advertized. He also reported that the Town would be selling several surplus vehicles when they had been replaced. The bids were as follows:

<u>18" Heavy Duty Brush Chipper</u>	<u>Electric</u>	<u>Budget \$35,000</u>
Vermeer - Charlotte.....		\$33,182.00
Vermeer - Virginia.....		35,248.00
Vermeer - Maryland.....		36,250.00
<u>New Holland TN55 or equivalent tractor</u>	<u>Street</u>	<u>Budget \$25,000</u>
Powell Brothers - Seneca.....		\$20,371.00
Nelson Tractor - Blairsville.....		20,681.00
Van Lott.....		NO BID
N. C. Equipment.....		NO BID

2001 Dodge 3500 or equivalent 4X4 Sanitation Budget \$40,000  
with 12-foot dump bed

Tabor Motors - Toccoa.....\$30,966.35  
Jim Brown - Franklin.....31,183.00  
Matthews Motors - Asheville.....31,554.00  
Edwards Auto Sales - Walhalla.....32,800.00

2001 International 4900 or equivalent Street Budget \$50,000  
4X2 with 10-foot dump bed

Carolina International - Greer.....\$48,851.00  
Carolina International - Darlington.....49,026.06  
Peterbilt - Greenville.....70,882.00

2001 Dodge Dakota or equivalent Administration Budget \$22,000  
4X4 Quad Cab

Jim Brown - Franklin.....\$22,070.00  
Tabor Motors - Toccoa.....22,542.00

MOVED BY COMM. CAVENDER, SECONDED BY COMM. SOSSOMON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ACCEPT THE LOW BID FOR EACH OF THE FOREGOING VEHICLES AND PIECES OF EQUIPMENT.

The Clerk reported that he would advertize for bids for the police car for October 18.

3. The Clerk reported that the Town Engineer had prepared drawings and specifications for the Fourth Street Sewer Line.

MOVED BY COMM. SOSSOMON, SECONDED BY COMM. JAMES, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADVERTIZE FOR BIDS FOR OCTOBER 18 FOR THE SEWER LINE.

4. The Town Administrator had prepared the following resolution in consultation with the Recreation Director, and he said County Manager Sam Greenwood had also reviewed it:

**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT  
OF AN APPLICATION BY MACON COUNTY  
FOR A PARKS AND RECREATION TRUST FUND GRANT**

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Highlands has long supported the acquisition of property in the Highlands Township by Macon County for ball parks and playing fields so that they can be enjoyed by residents of Macon County, both inside and outside of the Town limits; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 3, 1996, the Town of Highlands included the following in its annual budget request to Macon County:

"Our Board also urges the County Board of Commissioners to pursue the acquisition of additional land in the Highlands area for the construction of another Ball Park. The only Ball Park in the Highlands area now is the Town Ball Park on Hickory Street, which continues to host softball and baseball games throughout the season. There is a real need for an additional facility in this end of the County."

**WHEREAS**, Macon County subsequently funded and acquired property on Buck Creek Road in the Highlands Township, is in the process of grading that land for the development of a ball park, soccer field, and other facilities, and hopes to acquire additional land adjoining that property; and

**WHEREAS**, Macon County has applied for a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant in order to develop its property on Buck Creek Road so that it can be enjoyed for recreation residents of Macon County, including residents of the Town of Highlands.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Highlands in Regular Session assembled, that it strongly supports the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant application.

MOVED BY COMM. CAVENDER, SECONDED BY COMM. JAMES, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADOPT THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION.

5. MOVED BY COMM. SOSSOMON, SECONDED BY COMM. JAMES, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS NEGOTIATION FOR THE ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY ALONG BOWERY ROAD, PURSUANT TO G. S. §143-318.11(a)(5). All present left the room except for the Town Administrator and the Town Engineer.

The Board discussed negotiation for the acquisition of real property along Bowery Road.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. SOSSOMON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO GO INTO OPEN SESSION.

6. MOVED BY COMM. CAVENDER, THAT THE TOWN STAKE OUT A RIGHT-OF-WAY ALONG BOWERY ROAD PURSUANT TO DISCUSSIONS WITH PROPERTY OWNERS IN THE AREA, EVEN IF IT IS LESS THAN SUBDIVISION STANDARDS. There was no second to the motion.

Comm. James said that he did not feel there was any point in staking out something that doesn't meet subdivision standards; he also felt that by agreeing to a lower standard, the Town could lose the opportunity of the State paving the road.

Comm. Cavender said that he felt a compromise on right-of-way would allow the possibility of avoiding a lawsuit, as well as avoiding bitter feelings for years to come, while accomplishing a much safer road.

VII. MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. SOSSOMON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADJOURN.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was declared adjourned by the Mayor at 8:05 p.m.

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Richard Betz, Town Clerk