

REGULAR BOARD MEETING of August 18, 2004, with Mayor Buck Trott and Commissioners Amy Patterson, Hank Ross, H. N. James, Alan Marsh, and Dennis DeWolf present.

Also present were Richard Betz, Lamar Nix, Larry Gantenbein, Jerry Cook, Kim Lewicki, Amelia Pavlik, Lewis Doggett, Bob Wright, Jack Bournemann, Christy Kelly, Mario Gomez, Bronce Pesterfield, George Mathis, and others.

I. Call to Order.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Agenda.

Copies of the agenda had been distributed by mail. The Town Administrator asked that an appointment to the Advisory Committee for the Scholarship Endowment Fund be added under New Business.

MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

III. Approval of Minutes.

Copies of the minutes of the August 4 Public Hearing and Regular Board Meeting had been distributed by mail. The Clerk reported that Comm. James had noted an error; under Item No. 1 of New Business, the motion to approve the committee to gather information for proposals for the Town Hall should not have included the words "as a subcommittee to the Public Works Committee."

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED.

IV. Reports.

1. The Mayor reported that he would be attending the annual League of Municipalities Convention in Raleigh this year October 23-26; he urged anyone interested in attending to contact him.

He also reported that he had learned from the D. O. T. District Engineer that the portion of Bowery Road recently donated to the State would not be paved this year; he understood it had been postponed until the Petition for Discretionary Review by the Supreme Court had been decided so that the entire road could be paved at the same time. The Town Administrator reported that the Court had not heard that petition the previous week; the next date it would issue rulings would be October 8.

The Mayor also noted that he and some of those present had attended Irene Sanchez's funeral earlier in the day; Ms. Sanchez had been active in the community and had served on the Advisory Committee for the Scholarship Endowment Fund.

2. Comm. Ross reported that the Public Works Committee had met on August 17 and selected a potential design for a trash can; the cost was \$534, and one would be ordered so that all Board members could view it. He said the Committee was also looking into the possibility of having a trash can manufactured. Lamar Nix reported that he had received a report and map prepared by Bronce Pesterfield of the S. B. Association sewer system; officials had requested a meeting with the Public Works Committee to discuss it. The Committee agreed to meet at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, August 24, in the Conference Room.

3. Each Board member had received a copy of a letter from Macon County Manager Sam Greenwood, informing the Board that the Macon County Water and Sewer Committee would be drafting guidelines for

the County Infrastructure Funds of \$450,000 for which the Town had applied this year. The letter had also said that the Highlands Recreation Commission would be contacting the Town concerning recreation issues "including use and restrictions on recreation funding for this current fiscal year." Comm. James expressed concern over the Recreation Funding; he thought the Town ought to know what the restrictions were. Comm. Patterson agreed; this had not been discussed previously, and the County appeared to be changing the rules. Membership and meeting time of the Water and Sewer Committee was also discussed. By consensus, the Board asked the Town Administrator to request this information from the County Manager.

The Town Administrator also reported that Staff had met with Brian Tripp, P. E., the new W. K. Dickson Company project engineer for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. A 30-day comment period would begin today and plans were being submitted at the same time; approval was expected to take between 30 and 90 days. He said that, under the best scenario, plans could be approved by mid-September, the project bid, and bids awarded by the first of November.

The Town Administrator also reported that the GIS/Field Technician position had been advertized. He also said that he wanted to make it clear that the pole audit had been completed and the information was available in the form of maps, AutoCad, and ArcView files; it was not being withheld from the public, pursuant to a rumor he had heard. The process for correcting the many violations on the part of the Town, Northland, and Verizon would be a very lengthy and methodical one, however, and could take as long as two years. Comm. James said he would be surprised if it could be done in that length of time.

V. Old Business.

1. The Board discussed the permit issued at previous meetings for use of Town right-of-way for construction by Old Edwards Inn. The Town Administrator reported that the stone and other material had been moved on Church Street, Church Street Alley was now open but would be closed for paving at some point in the near future, and work on Fourth Street would be completed within two weeks; the latter work had been delayed by a problem with the curb, which had been corrected.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE CONTINUATION OF THE PERMIT ISSUED AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1.

The Board also discussed the permit issued at the previous meeting to the Highlands Community Child Development Center Inc. The construction trailer had been moved as permitted, but Bob Wright was present and stated that the HCCDC wished to withdraw the second request, for construction of a sidewalk and retaining wall east of the driveway; he said other options were being explored.

MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE CONTINUATION OF THE PERMIT ISSUED AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1.

VI. New Business.

1. Each Board member had received minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee on August 10. The Committee had been asked at the June 2nd meeting to review several requests for funding from non-profit organizations and make recommendations on distributing the \$50,000 budgeted for FY 04-05, and also to develop a process by which such requests may be evaluated in future years. It had suggested the following criteria for approving funding:

1. The organization applying for funding should be deemed non-profit by the Internal Revenue Service in accordance with IRS

Code Section 501(C)(3).

2. The requested funding should in some way benefit the general population of the Highlands area, rather than a single select group or a "pet" charity. [Example: the Hudson Library could be considered to provide an asset that is available to everyone in the community, including citizens and visitors.]

3. Consideration should also be given to non-profit organizations that have a specific purpose or provide a service that the Town would otherwise have to provide. [Example: the Macon County Humane Society could be considered to provide a place where the Town can take stray animals.]

4. More consideration should be given to requests for specific capital projects, bricks-and-mortar-type expenses, or start-up costs, than to requests for funding for continuing operating expenses which might be expected from the Town each year as part of an annual budget.

5. Non-profit organizations should be willing to provide a detailed budget and accounting for how funds have been and are intended to be spent; books should be open for inspection, and applicants should be prepared to report midway through the year if requested.

MOVED BY COMM. DEWOLF, SECONDED BY COMM. ROSS, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

The Committee agreed to schedule a meeting to apply these criteria to current applications and return to the Board with a recommendation.

2. Each Board member had received copies of correspondence between the Town Administrator and Karen Hallett of Thinc Management, the Town's telecommunications consultant. Mr. Betz explained that when Ms. Hallett had recently inspected Town sites, she had felt that the Satulah Mountain Water Tank site was suitable for a monopole, and there apparently was some interest from one or more carriers; in order to proceed, the Zoning Ordinance would have to be amended since only attachments to the tank were permitted on that site at present. The consensus of the Board was that, if approved, camouflage technology should be used for a monopole. Comm. James questioned whether the site could be used for anything other than a water tank, however; he thought it might be restricted by deed. The Town Administrator agreed to review the deed, and the Board deferred this matter until the next meeting.

3. The Town Administrator reported that Kitty Byers had met with the Advisory Committee for the Scholarship Endowment Fund and begun to organize the annual golf tournament coming up in September, and had requested that the Board consider adding Louise Demetriou to the Committee.

MOVED BY COMM. MARSH, SECONDED BY COMM. PATTERSON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPOINT LOUISE DEMETRIOU TO THE COMMITTEE TO FILL IRENE SANCHEZ'S UNEXPIRED TERM.

4. MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO G.S.143-318.11(A)(6) TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS WITH THE POLICE CHIEF. All present left the room except the Clerk and the Police Chief.

Police Chief Jerry Cook discussed with the Board officers who may be retiring in the near future.

MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO GO INTO OPEN SESSION. The public was invited back into the meeting room.

5. MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO AUTHORIZE THE POLICE CHIEF TO ADVERTISE FOR A FULL-TIME POLICE OFFICER AS NEEDED.

VII. MOVED BY COMM. DEWOLF, SECONDED BY COMM. PATTERSON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADJOURN.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was declared adjourned by the Mayor at 8:08 p.m.

Richard Betz, Town Clerk