

**Regular Meeting Minutes of the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners Meeting of December 14, 2017, at the Highlands Community Building, 71 Poplar Street, Highlands, North Carolina**

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

Not Present: Commissioner Eric Pierson

Also Present: Town Manager Josh Ward, Town Attorney Jay Coward, Finance Director Rebecca Shuler, Public Works Director and Town Engineer Lamar Nix, MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler, Police Chief Bill Harrell, Parks & Recreation Director Lester Norris, Planning & Development Director Andrew Bowen, Computer Support Specialist Mark Hall and Town Clerk Gibby Shaheen

**1. Meeting Called to Order**

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

**2. Public Comment Period**

There were no comments.

**3. Adjust and Approve the Agenda**

Commissioner Calloway made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Patterson and the vote was unanimous.

**4. Approval of the November 16, 2017, Regular Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Patterson requested clarification in the Mayor Report on page 4 where Matt was discussing the broadband process, and she had asked if our professional had begun reviewing the financials not bidding, so “bidding” should be “vetting.” Town Clerk Gibby Shaheen requested the 2018 Holiday Schedule be added to the minutes.

Commissioner Patterson made a motion to approve the November 16, 2017, regular meeting minutes as amended, which was seconded by Commissioner Stiehler and the vote was unanimous.

**5. Reports**

**A. Mayor**

Mayor Taylor stated he had attended the quarterly Southwestern Regional Meeting and Transportation Advisory Meeting.

Mayor Taylor thanked the Chamber of Commerce and participants in the parade. Mayor Taylor also stated he appreciated the involvement of the Franklin High School Band.

Mayor Taylor announced the chipper would be arriving soon to begin chipping up the debris left by Hurricane Irma. Mayor Taylor also announced that Phil Potts and the boy scouts would be placing the wreaths for Wreaths Across America at 12:00pm Saturday with a short ceremony to honor the deceased veterans in the cemetery.

**B. Commissioners and Committee Reports**

Commissioner Calloway stated he had been approached by a few citizens who wanted to make donations to enhance our Christmas lighting next year and he had discussed the suggestions with Town Manager Josh Ward and Public Works Director and Town Engineer Lamar Nix.

Commissioner Patterson stated the Mayor had appointed a committee to look at the dogs and the Pine Street Park issue and she had met with Parks & Recreation Director Lester Norris, Planning & Development Director Andrew Bowen, Town Manager Josh Ward, Commissioner Stiehler, Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson, Police Chief Harrell and Friends of the Park representative Hank Ross on working on changes to go into the Code

and had a good discussion and some good ideas. Commissioner Patterson stated that it looked like we are not going to be banning dogs but are going to be doing some things where we don't have the problem that people are worried about, and there would be changes to the Code that will have to come before the Board.

Mayor Taylor stated that Commissioner Pierson had the flu and could not make it to the meeting.

### **C. Town Manager**

Town Manager Josh Ward stated he had spoken with Mark Hill with the NCDOT and the grinder would arrive and chipping will begin Monday, and the chipping should take about a week and then they would hauling it away, so that should help with the noise concern. Town Manager Josh Ward stated they have been delayed because of the bad weather and other issues including obtaining a permit from the NCDMV and the requirement of a State Trooper escort. Commissioner Patterson asked that the trucks entering highway signs be taken down and put back up when the actual hauling begins. Mayor Taylor stated he had been approached about saving the mulch for use by the citizens, and his response to them was that the mulch was rough and there will so much it will have to be hauled away so we can have the use of our parking lot. Mayor Taylor stated he advised the citizens we have mulch available throughout the year from the trim crew from time to time. Town Manager Josh Ward stated it will be removed by a semi-truck to the Macon County landfill.

Town Manager Josh Ward stated Verizon attachments would not be complete and online until the end of January.

### **6. Consent Agenda**

Public Works Department  
Police Department  
Parks & Recreation Department  
Planning & Development Department  
Treasurer's Report

Commissioner Stiehler made a motion to accept the consent agenda as presented, which was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson and the vote was unanimous.

### **7. Swearing In of Newly Re-Elected Mayor and Town Board Members: Mayor Patrick Taylor, Commissioner Amy Patterson and Commissioner Donnie Calloway**

Macon County Clerk of Superior Court Victor H. Perry gave the Oath of Office to Mayor Patrick Taylor and Commissioners Amy Patterson and Donnie Calloway who were reelected on November 7, 2017.

### **8. 2016-17 Auditors Report**

Joe Haney from Martin, Starnes & Associates presented the annual audit overview.

### **9. Proposed PAC Plan Presentation**

Paul Schmitt presented drawings and pictures of the proposed plan of the addition to the Performing Arts Center, and the new addition would have 330 seats and an additional Black Box area. Schmitt stated that Performing Arts Center had acquired the adjoining property and would allow them to add almost 17,000 square feet to the existing 5,200 square foot facility. The existing theater would remain as the Chamber Music Concert Hall and Black Box and also would be used as a movie theater and rehearsals, so it will have multiuse. The main area in the new wing will contain 280 seats on the main floor and 50 seats in the balcony and will have a full fly system. The new addition will also allow additional storage, dressing rooms and bathrooms. There will be access to lower section of the parking lot with the main entrance remaining on Chestnut Street.

Schmitt continued stating a couple of things happen in creating a full theater and the biggest change would be to put in a full fly system. Schmitt stated to create the opening for a theater of this scale 20 feet in height is the normal height, and not exaggerated, and 40 foot wide and is similar in height to the current existing theater, but the difference is the fly structure would end up being 48 feet tall. Commissioner Patterson asked if the theater is erect because the new stage is actually lower than the current stage. Schmitt answered the stage is lower than the current stage only because we used the existing floor level of the existing PAC theater and this stage is actually level with the main entrance so when the seating projection you have some below the stage system and the some above, but actually the existing stage will still be 30 inches higher.

Hank Ross stated that the additional property obtained slopes down and leaves a grade with Chestnut Street, landscape plans are to keep the Frasier Fur and oak on newly acquired property and adding some things to make a nice curb appeal and landscape.

Mayor Taylor asked if the drop off would remain and Schmitt said it would remain and there would be an additional entrance with a drop zone with two story entry in both places.

Schmitt stated there was a life safety exit plan in agreement with the building department and Fire Marshall. Schmitt stated the interior space products used will be wood products, stone work and wood flooring.

Schmitt stated the exterior we will utilize gravel parking areas and grass with the plastic rings in parking. Roofline 25-26 foot and 48 feet in the back.

Schmitt stated he had met with Town Manager Josh Ward to plan an approach to seek the approval process, obviously we are above the 35 foot high restriction for Highlands and zoning of the property adjacent to the PAC as part of the process with hopes of constructing later in 2018. The parking on the right side of the building will be lost because it will be used for a staging area.

Commissioner Patterson asked how many restrooms were located in the building. Schmitt answered that the existing restrooms are increased in size and there are an additional set on the other side of the building and two single units on both sides upstairs.

Commissioner Patterson asked if there would be a lower level in the new addition. Schmitt stated the level would have the orchestra pit and at some point hoping to have a catering kitchen, so refrigeration could be used there.

Commissioner Calloway asked how the extra height would look, will it be brick, wood or glass in the structure. Schmitt answered it would be wood or wood looking material such as wood shakes, something with texture.

Commissioner Patterson asked so what is the process? Town Manager Josh Ward answered that the next step would be for them to apply for a Conditional Rezone with the Zoning Board, part of the property is GI and the other part is not, then to the Planning Board and ultimately to this Board. The Town owns the current building and PAC owns the property surrounding and the plan is for PAC to own the entire property.

Commissioner Patterson stated that it's hard for the town to give away assets correct Jay? Attorney Jay Coward stated that a transfer of property to a non-profit for public purposes is allowed, but will look into it further.

## **10. N.C. Historical Highway Marker Request**

Ran Shaffner stated he wanted to request input and support for the proposal of a historical highway marker honoring Mary Lapham. Shaffner stated he is requesting the marker be placed on the driveway close to the steps of the cottage used at the sanitarium on the Rec. Park property in the right of way. Shaffner stated that Mary Lapham opened the Sanitarium on the Rec. Park property from 1908-1918, and was ultimately responsible for 80% cured people by using her method to cure Tuberculosis.

Shaffner stated that if the Board agreed the Historical Society would need a letter of approval for the marker, and the request would go before that board and then if approved there, the marker should be established in June or July.

Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson stated the steps to the cottage seemed to be in the state of disrepair and asked if that was on Historical Society property or Rec Park property. Shaffner replied that it was Rec Park property. Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson stated the steps seemed to need upgraded. Shaffner stated that the Greenway would take care of the repair and upgrade the steps.

Commissioner Calloway made a motion to give the letter of support, which was seconded by Commissioner Stiehler and the vote was unanimous.

**11. Recognition of Donation – Police K-9**

Police Chief Bill Harrell recognized the donation of \$1,500.00 from Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, \$1,000.00 from Colonel and Mrs. Campbell and \$200.00 from Leila Chapman.

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS BUDGET AMENDMENT  
AMENDMENT # \_\_\_\_\_

December 11, 2017

FROM: General Fund



DEPARTMENT: Police Dept.

EXPLANATION: Recognize revenue from various donors for the purchase of a K9

	<b>Account</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>Debit</b>	<b>Credit</b>
1.	10-3100-0721	Donations ~ Police	Increase		\$2,700.00
	10-5100-5700	Miscellaneous	Increase	\$2,700.00	
			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,700.00</b>	<b>\$2,700.00</b>
			<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,700.00</b>	<b>\$2,700.00</b>

Approved by Town Manager

Action by Town Board

Approved and Entered on Minutes Dated

Finance Director

Commissioner Patterson made a motion recognize the donor and approve the budget amendment for the K-9 for the police department, which was seconded by Commissioner Calloway and the vote was unanimous.

**12. Recognition of Donation – Swim Team Timing System**

Parks & Recreation Director Lester Norris stated that the swim team had come to him and asked for permission to raise money to purchase a timing system. Parks & Recreation Director Lester Norris stated that Art Williams came to him about a month ago and said he would like to donate the money to purchase the timing system and have it installed.

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS BUDGET AMENDMENT  
AMENDMENT # \_\_\_\_\_

December 11, 2017

FROM: General Fund



DEPARTMENT: Recreation ~ Pool

EXPLANATION: Recognize revenue from the Highlands Hurricane's Swim Team to purchase a Time Clock

<b>Account</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>Debit</b>	<b>Credit</b>
1. 10-3360-0191	Donation ~ Pool Equipt.	Increase		\$30,945.00
10-6210-7400	Capital Outlay/Equipment	Increase	\$30,945.00	
			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$30,945.00</b>
			<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$30,945.00</b>

Approved by Town Manager

Action by Town Board

Approved and Entered on Minutes Dated

Finance Director

Commissioner Patterson made a motion and thanked Mr. Williams for the donation and to approve the Budget Amendment to accept the donation for the timing system for the pool, which was seconded by Commissioner Stiehler and the vote was unanimous.

**13. Budget Amendment & Project Ordinance: Buckhorn Water Tank Replacement**

Town Manager Josh Ward stated that at the October meeting Public Works Director and Town Engineer Lamar Nix went over a couple different options for the Buckhorn Water Tank replacement, and the consensus was to move forward with one large tank and new pump station, Town Manager Josh Ward continued that due to the project crossing over into the next budget year, a project ordinance is the best way to allocate the funds. The projected cost from W.K. Dickson for the construction totaled \$1,377,600. The current budget includes \$596,000, which will be reallocated to the new project ordinance.

Approve the project ordinance to allocate the funds for the new water tank and pump station construction, which will begin this fiscal year and go into the next one.

Commissioner Patterson stated she was unclear if we were amending this year's current budget to allocate the entire amount. Town Manager Josh Ward stated to make it simple, the Project Budget Ordinance backed out the initial \$596,000 and then it will add the new number \$1,377,600 and it will extend into next year's budget. Finance Director Rebecca Shuler stated we have to put it all in one number because we really don't know how much it will cost at the end, but the projected amount will be able to be paid as it is owed and will roll over into next year's budget.

**Town of Highlands  
Project Budget Ordinance**



BE IT ORDAINED by the Governing Board of the Town of Highlands, North Carolina that, pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following capital project ordinance is hereby adopted:

Section 1. The project authorized includes improvements to Buckhorn Water Tank to be financed by reserves.

Section 2. The officers of this unit are hereby directed to proceed with the capital project within the terms of the bond resolution, contract documents, and the budget contained herein.

Section 3. The following amounts are appropriated for the project:

Planning & Project Management	\$14,300.00
Design	\$71,300.00
Permitting	\$7,750.00
Construction Bidding	\$7,750.00
Construction Administration	\$23,000.00

Construction Observation		\$29,000.00
<b>Engineering Total:</b>		<b>\$153,100.00</b>
Opinion of Probable Construction Cost:		\$1,224,500.00
<b>Project Total:</b>		<b>\$1,377,600.00</b>

Section 4. The following revenues are anticipated to be available to complete this project:

Town of Highlands Electric Reserve	<u>\$1,377,600.00</u>
	<b>\$1,377,600.00</b>

Section 5. The Finance Officer is hereby directed to maintain within the Capital Project Fund sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy the requirements of the contract documents and the budget contained herein. The terms of the bond resolution also shall be met.

Section 6. Funds may be advanced from the Electric Fund for the purpose of making payments as due.

Section 7. The Finance Director is directed to report, on a quarterly basis, on the financial status of each project element in Section 3.

Section 8. The Finance Officer is directed to include a detailed analysis of past and future costs and revenues on this capital project in every budget submission made to this Board.

Section 9. Copies of this capital project ordinance shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Governing Board and to the Finance Officer for direction in carrying out this project.

Adopted this the 14<sup>th</sup> day of December 2017.

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Patrick L. Taylor, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Gilberta B. Shaheen, Town Clerk

December 14, 2017

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS BUDGET AMENDMENT  
AMENDMENT # \_\_\_\_\_

Electric Fund



DEPARTMENT: Water Dept.

EXPLANATION: Remove monies originally budgeted for the Buckhorn Water Tank and budget the new amounts that match the Project Budget Ordinance adopted on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2017

	<b>Account</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>Debit</b>	<b>Credit</b>
1.	35-3800-0910	Fund Balance Approp. ~ Electric	Decrease	\$596,000.00	
	35-8300-9501	Transfer to Water Fund	Decrease		\$596,000.00
			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$596,000.00</b>	<b>\$596,000.00</b>
2.	30-3800-0936	Transfer from Electric Fund	Decrease	\$596,000.00	
	30-8110-7300	Capital Outlay/Other Imp.	Decrease		\$596,000.00
			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$596,000.00</b>	<b>\$596,000.00</b>
3.	35-3800-0910	Fund Balance Approp. ~ Electric	Increase		\$1,377,600.00
	35-8300-9501	Transfer to Water Fund	Increase	\$1,377,600.00	

				<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,377,600.00</b>	<b>\$1,377,600.00</b>
4.	30-3800-0936	Transfer from Electric Fund	Increase			\$1,377,600.00
	30-8110-7300	Capital Outlay/Other Imp.	Increase		\$1,377,600.00	
				<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,377,600.00</b>	<b>\$1,377,600.00</b>
				<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$3,947,200.00</b>	<b>\$3,947,200.00</b>

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 Amendment and Project Ordinance as presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Stiehler and the vote was unanimous.

**14. Budget Amendment: Village Walk Sewer Line Replacement**

Public Works Director and Town Engineer Lamar Nix stated that at Village Walk we had a couple of insurance claims relating to a stopped up sewer line and that during that investigation there were two pipes found to have tree roots in the line. Public Works Director and Town Engineer Lamar Nix stated that when it gets into the line it is like hair and continues to grow. Public Works Director and Town Engineer Lamar Nix stated that they used small cameras to find a total of two sections of pipe that need replacing.

Commissioner Calloway asked if the homeowners are putting in backflow systems to alleviate some of the backup. Town Manager Josh Ward stated that one unit was for certain and he had discussed sending out letters to suggest to the other unit owners to install them to help.

Commissioner Patterson asked if our crew was doing the work or if Stillwell and Public Works Director and Town Engineer Lamar Nix stated Stillwell.

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS BUDGET AMENDMENT  
AMENDMENT # \_\_\_\_\_

December 11, 2017

FROM: General Fund



DEPARTMENT: Water Dept.  
EXPLANATION: Appropriate funds to cover repair to Village Walk Water line (roots in line)

	<b>Account</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>Debit</b>	<b>Credit</b>
1.	10-3100-0910	Fund Bal Approp. ~ GF	Increase		\$57,750.00
	10-4100-9501	Transfer to Water Fund	Increase	\$57,750.00	
				<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$57,750.00</b>
2.	30-3800-0931	Transfer from Gen. Fund	Increase		\$57,750.00
	30-8110-7300	Capital Outlay/Other Imp.	Increase	\$57,750.00	
				<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$57,750.00</b>
				<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$115,500.00</b>

Approved by Town Manager

Action by Town Board

Approved and Entered on Minutes Dated

Finance Director

Commissioner Patterson made a motion to approve the project and budget amendment with the corrected amount, which was seconded by Commissioner Calloway and the vote was unanimous.

#### **15. Main Street U-Turn Discussion**

Mayor Taylor stated at the planters there are the No U-turn signs and many times are knocked over and so forth and really people make them anyway and when looking closer there is plenty of room to take the U-Turn and ask the board permission to remove the U-Turn signs.

Commissioner Stiehler agreed and stated he thought it was safer to use the U-turn than to go through a parking space.

Mayor Taylor continued that Police Chief Bill Harrell was in agreement. Chief Bill Harrell stated there had been no accidents were a U-Turn was the cause.

Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson remembered there was discussion about the U-Turn signs previously because of vehicles crossing into the crosswalk, Mayor Taylor stated there is still enough space for the U-Turn and not go into the crosswalk.

Commissioner Calloway made a motion to remove the U-Turn signs on Main Street, which was seconded by Commissioner Stiehler, and the vote was 3 to 1, with Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson voting nay.

#### **16. WebCam Discussion**

MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler stated a few months ago there was a presentation of a WebCam idea and there were concerns that the town would have no control and after the meeting we talked about we had some surplus cameras and decided that we could put them up and see what we can do. MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler placed two cameras, one on Main Street and one with different views on Bearpen.

MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler displayed the camera on Bearpen shows Albert Mountain on Standing Indian, Wayah Bald, Whiteside, Big Sheepcliff, Black Balsam and Clemson. You can set it to fixed, tour and can give the ability to go to the presets so you can have some or no liberties.

Commissioner Stiehler asked how far the camera was on the tower, and MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler 100 feet tall on the tower.

MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler spoke with Jason Boyer Chief Meteorologist from WLOS and he would use the Whiteside and Main Street views if the Board gives permission and displayed mock presentations. MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler stated that it would name Highlands but the reference to Leicester Flooring Skycam had to remain.

Commissioner Patterson asked if it can be multiuser so an individual could point it where you want it. MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler said only if you allow, you would never give them full ability to move the camera only presets of what you want them to see, or you can give them a viewing option.

MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler displayed the camera on Main Street zoned out and changed angle and fixed camera so no one could be recognized.

Commissioner Patterson stated she had a concern that this could be misleading because of the roads cleared here doesn't mean the roads are clear getting here.

Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson stated he felt like both views should be fixed, one on Whiteside because it would be the shot of notoriety and people will know what they're looking at and presets are not necessary. Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson stated that we should have two thumbnails on the website to choose either the Whiteside or Main Street views.

MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler suggested the less expensive we can do a long distance shot with two cameras on the tower for the same price with two fixed views and will



have to purchase cameras, the ones that adjust are \$2,500 and stationery are \$1,000-\$1,500.

Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson asked if the cameras would be high definition and MIS/GIS Director Matt Shuler stated these cameras are 720 pixel and the new ones bought would be high definition, they will have a better picture.

Stiehler stated he felt one fixed camera would be enough for the price and he liked the Whiteside view.

Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson from a PR perspective Main Street will be the shot people will be linking to.

Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson made a motion to invest in two higher definition cameras with a fixed view of Whiteside and Main Street to replace the ones used initially, which was seconded by Commissioner Stiehler and the vote was unanimous.

## **17. Adjournment**

As there were no further matters to come before the Board of Commissioners, Commissioner Calloway moved to adjourn which was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Dotson and upon a unanimous vote, the Town Board adjourned at 8:37pm.

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Patrick Taylor  
Mayor

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Gilberta B. Shaheen  
Town Clerk