

City of High Shoals
Regular Council Meeting
January 9, 2024

- Call to Order
 - Mayor PJ Rathbone called the meeting to order at 6:28 pm. In attendance are the following: Tim Eidson, Kathy Rhyne, Bo Rhyne, Denese Cook, and Dennis Cash. Bobby Vassey was not in attendance due to a medical procedure.
- Invocation
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Approval of Agenda
 - Motion to approve the agenda made by Denese Cook, seconded by Tim Eidson. All ayes.
- Approval of Minutes
 - Motion to approve minutes by Kathy Rhyne, seconded by Dennis Cash. All ayes.

Citizens' comments/concerns: The City of High Shoals Council offers citizens the opportunity for Public Expression issues per NCGS 160A-81.1 (limited to 3-5 minutes per speaker).

Good of the Order: This is a time set aside for members to offer comments or observations (without formal motion) about the organization and its work. The good of the order is also the time to offer resolution to bring disciplinary charges against a member for the offenses committed outside a meeting.

➤ Departmental Reports:

➤ Police Report-Gaston County

- There were only 2 arrests in December. A simple assault and a damage to property.
- 6 domestic calls, 2 drug violations, 1 vehicle accident, 2 assaults, and call to animal control.
- 7 special checks at Armstrong Circle, 7 special checks at City Hall, special checks at Frye & 403 N Lincoln drug house locations.
- License checks (10 in one intersection)
- Post Office special check
- 44 cases with 50 offenses last year with 35 arrests.
- 1500 calls for service this year, dropped from 1700 from previous year

➤ Auditor *Eddie Carrick*

- Eddie thanked the board for being given the opportunity to represent the city.
- Bottom line for General Fund expenditures spent \$21,200 more in fixing things.
- Fund balance increased
- Fund balance increased 81% & well above the 34% from the state flag, and up from 76% from the previous year.
- Ad valorem tax rate was 98.16% received
- North Carolina may come up with their own set
- Water/Sewer up don't include transfers. ARPA funds is NOT included.
- Unrestricted cash increased \$22,200 this past year.
- There is nothing expected from the City from the State. When the water/sewer assets drops below 50%, it throws a flag with the state. We're increasing the system, and need to continue to update the system. City of High Shoals is at 81%! Most cities range from 48-51% in the state.
- You'll notice in the back of the financial statements, since the City did spend over \$750,000 of capital funds, we had to do a Uniform Performance Audit.

➤ Financial-Dennis Cash

- Checking: \$486,306.38
 - Savings 1: \$11,109.06
 - Savings 2: \$160,598.90
 - Cap Mgmt: \$46,720.18
 - Total: \$704,734.52
- Cemetery-Denese Cook
 - Repairs were made to broken headstones
 - We've had a lot of sales this year
- Water/Sewer-Bo Rhyne
 - Still have the drip on the bridge
 - The float ball will not go in to the tube
 - There was an extra part available, Kathy asked if we need to purchase another one to replace the one we used. PJ stated that we need a spare with two different lengths for each lift station.
- Streets/Maintenance/Sanitation-Kathy Rhyne
 - Trash was picked up today, kudos to the men for doing such
 - Repair on State street, dug out & cleared out holes (washed out)
 - PJ stated the pipe is rusted out (going down to the woods), and there are power lines straight on top of it. It needs to be completely replaced. Tim said it's been an issue for years but it was ignored. PJ stated we need to address this issue soon!
 - The salt spreader needs a part to hook to the dump truck.
 - Speed bumps painted, and the signs cleaned
- Parks/Recreation-Bobby Vassey
 - Yard of the Month: 108 River Street ~ Gina Beal
 - The park has been scraped and looks great
- Vehicles- Little trash truck needed a sensor, we were not charged for it. No issues with it today.
 - All vehicles are in working condition
 - Kathy stated she told the guys to crank the truck for at least 30 minutes when it's super cold out before taking off with the truck.
- Administration/Mayor Report-PJ Rathbone
 - Small update with the Revitalization Grant. Recipients will be announced Friday. If for some reason we don't receive, Steve has a backup plan.
 - The Mill property, we have a meeting coming up with the BrownField planning grant. We've provided them with everything they've requested.
 - Denese Cook asked if someone has applied for the house grants, Roger Henderson's floors/house is falling apart. PJ stated when we first started, we couldn't find people to sign up because they were scared. He said if we have someone, after talking to Steve, go ahead and apply so we can help them. With this second round, it would take care of everyone who has applied so far, with perhaps some left over.
 - Water line from Dallas is still being worked on. We're going to have to come to an agreement on the monetary side. We've got another meeting at the end of the month with Dallas.

➤ **Old Business:**

- Discussion/Action: Departmental Assignments
 - “When we have a re-election we normally have re-assignments. If everyone is in agreement, if everyone was to keep their departments and give Tim Eidson the vehicles.” Dennis Cash made motion to keep the assignments with the addition of Tim overseeing vehicles. Seconded by Mr. Rhyne. All ayes.
- Discussion/Action: Calendar
 - Motion to table made by Kathy Rhyne, seconded by Denese Cook. All ayes.

➤ **New Business:**

- Discussion/Action: Water ORC
 - “If you’re not aware, we are required to have a water ORC in charge of our water system. When we had the issue, the Town of Ranlo, Jason Green, asked his town manager to help High Shoals. He has been a huge help. Since that has happened, their town manager has left. Jason Green is acting town manager and has been coming to train Robby, Brian, and Brandi. We had a state inspection on December 8th. With that inspection, there were no deficiencies but there are some things they’d like to see us do concerning our water system. There are six different in-depth issues that we have. This is consisting with plan changes. Jason called PJ stating that he’s overwhelmed and doesn’t have time within his regular schedule. In the past we have contracted someone to do this for us. PJ is requesting to make Jason an employee as a subcontractor for the city of High Shoals. PJ asked Jason when he would have time, he said he could justify working on these issues on the weekend.”
 - A policy needs to be in place before sending anyone to school.
 - Denese made a motion to contract Jason Green and do some training with the guys for \$1000 monthly, seconded by Bo Rhyne, all ayes.
- Discussion/Action: Lead & Copper Study
 - With the whole training piece, for each location there are 13 pages of paperwork to go along with it. Construction date must be qualified. PJ requested that there be assigned a lead. The council suggested & agreed with Brian taking the lead and being given the option to work weekends. No formal action was taken.
- Discussion/Action: Take Home Vehicles
 - With stipulations, a signed policy, I’d like to have the employees have the opportunity to take the vehicle home. Kathy states a mileage log should be given. “We have to protect our assets and our city.” Kathy Rhyne stated. Kathy Rhyne and Tim Eidson both said we should look into securing new or leased trucks. Kathy stated she’d be scared to drive any of the city’s vehicles home.
 - Denese stated she’d perhaps like to see a probationary period with this.
 - Motion to allow vehicles with a written/signed policy made by Denese Cook, seconded by Kathy Rhyne. All in favor.

➤ **Motion to Adjourn**

- Motion to adjourn made by Kathy Rhyne, seconded by Denese Cook. All in favor.