

CITY OF HIGH SHOALS
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
November 14, 2023

Call to Order: The City of High Shoals was called to order on November 14, 2023 at 6:30 pm at the High Shoals City Hall. Present at the meeting were PJ Rathbone, Bobby Vassey, Bo Rhyne, Denese Cook and, Dennis Cash.

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda was made by Denese Cook with a second from Bobby Vassey. All approved

Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes from the October 10, 2023 regular meeting was made by Denese Cook and seconded by Bobby Vassey. All approved.

Citizen's Comments: Michael Lee said that the sewer easement on his property on Holly Ridge Road as part of the sewer line interconnect is not being mowed and cleared. The Mayor said he and Bo Rhyne would come and visit him at his property and work to get it cleared.

Good of the Order: Mayor Rathbone commented on how successful the 50th Anniversary celebration went and thanked everyone involved in the planning and working the event. He also read two letters he received from two former residents who came to the celebration and how much they enjoyed it.

Departmental Reports:

Police Report: Captain Matt Hensley from the Gaston County Police Department presented the police report for October 2023 and provided a copy of the monthly incident report to the Council.

Finance: Dennis Cash reported that the City had \$440,932.48 in checking account #1, \$11,107.17 in checking account #2, \$160,477.55 in savings, and \$45,312.22 in capital management for a total balance of \$658,829.42.

Cemetery: Denese Cook stated that there have been squatters in the old section of the cemetery. She complimented the police department for quickly responding to calls about it.

Water and Sewer: Bo Rhyne said there was a leak in the water line on the 321 bridge and that he had contacted Tim Eidson to take a look at it.

Streets and Sanitation: The Mayor reported that the garbage truck was back from being repaired. He also reported that the City had received the garbage truck recently purchased from the City of

Gastonia. He also noted that vehicle HS1 needed to be returned to the transmission shop for repairs in the coming week.

Administration: Mayor Rathbone said he had no addition report.

Old Business:

Military Banners: The Mayor said the City had received requests for approximately seven more of the commemorative military banners. He noted that the cost of the banners has gone up since they were first ordered to a total cost of approximately \$1,200. He recommended that tabling any action and include this cost in next year's budget.

New Business:

Holiday Bonus: A motion was made by Bo Rhyne to provide each of the three full time employees a \$1,000 Christmas bonus this year. It was seconded by Denese Cook. All approved.

New Employee: Mayor Rathbone stated that Council members had brought up the recommendation of suspending new employee Brian Wilson's probationary period due to his superior work. Bo Rhyne made a motion to suspend Brian Wilson's probationary period and give him a \$3/hour pay increase effective immediately. Bobby Vassey seconded the motion. All approved.

Municipal Accounting Services, Cybersecurity Memorandum of Agreement: Mayor Rathbone presented a memorandum of agreement regarding cybersecurity between the City and the North Carolina League of Municipalities. He stated that the cybersecurity measure would be provided at no cost to the City as a member of the League. A motion was made by Dennis Cash to approve the agreement. The motion was seconded by Bobby Vassey. All approved.

Ordinance Amendment Chapter 32: The Mayor presented the amendment that would change the requirement that the City Clerk is required to be reappointed after each municipal election. The change would clarify that the City Clerk is an employee of the City and not necessarily a political appointee. He said that High Shoals was one of the last municipalities to still have this requirement in its municipal codes. A motion was made by Denese Cook to amend Chapter 32 of the City Code of Ordinances to no longer require that the City Clerk be reappointed by the Council after each election. Bobby Vassey seconded the motion. All approved.

Banners for the Park: The Mayor stated that thirteen new banners were needed for the City park. However, he recommended that the topic be tabled until the December meeting when more information about pricing could be available. A motion was made by Denese Cook to table discussion and action on banners for the park until the December 2023 meeting. This motion was seconded by Bo Rhyne. All approved.

Mill Property: The Mayor reported that he had been approached by Centralina Council of Governments regarding the status of the City's efforts to receive federal Brownfield funding for

the old mill property. He stated that much work had been done to secure funding to clean up the property from contamination, but he stated that in order to move forward the City had to own or have site control of the property. He said he had spoken with the property owner and said they were agreeable to working with the City on transferring ownership. No action was taken, but the Mayor just wanted approval from the Council whether or not to move forward with this and bring more information to the Council for further consideration. All approved.

Interlocal Agreement Gaston County (water): The Mayor presented the Council with an interlocal agreement between the City, Gaston County and the Town of Dallas regarding the construction of a water line extending along Business Highway 321 from Dallas to the southern border of the High Shoals city limits that will provide a new water connection for the City. A motion was made by Dennis Cash to approve the agreement. Bo Rhyne seconded. All approved.

Sewer Issues Lincoln Terrace: The Mayor reported that sewer lines on the Lincoln Terrace Apartments are in very bad condition and that they present a threat of causing a sewage spill. He said that there is no record that these city-owned lines but that the City had typically made repairs as needed because the apartment owners don't. He said he would provide the Council more information at next month's meeting.

Secondary Power Lines on State Street: The Mayor reported that trees need to be trimmed back on secondary power lines that extend to the lift station. He provided a quote in the amount of \$2,840 to have the trees trimmed. A motion was made by Dennis Cash to approve the quote for the trimming of the trees. The motion was seconded by Bo Rhyne. All approved.

§ 143-318.11. Closed Session: A motion was made to table going into closed session until the December 2023 meeting by Denese Cook. Bobby Vassey seconded the motion. All approved.

Motion to Adjourn: Denese Cook moved to adjourn. Bobby Vassey seconded and all approved.