

CITY OF HIGH SHOALS
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
August 8, 2023

Call to Order: The City of High Shoals was called to order on August 8, 2023 at 6:30 pm at the High Shoals City Hall. Present at the meeting were PJ Rathbone, Mayor, Denese Cook, Mayor Pro Tem, and Council members Kathy Rhyne, Bobby Vassey, Bo Rhyne, Dennis Cash.

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes from the July 11, 2023 regular meeting was made by Dennis Cash and seconded by Bo Rhyne. All approved.

Citizen's Comments: None

Good of the Order: Denese Cook reported that the pole light near first base at the City Park is out. Mayor Rathbone said he would contact an electrician to get a cost for replacing the bulb.

Departmental Reports:

Police Report: The Gaston County Police Department representative submitted and reviewed the July police report. He recommended that the City install signs at all City properties stating a closing time to allow them to be better able to make people leave to enforce trespassing rules in needed. He also recommended that the City contact the developer for the new subdivision to make sure they secure their materials and tools during construction, as the County police have seen increased thefts at construction sites.

Finance: Dennis Cash reported that the City had \$453,959.75 in the checking account, \$160,356.30 in the savings account, \$11,104.32 in savings account 2, and \$45,705.48 in the capital management account for a total of \$671,125.85.

Cemetery: Denese Cook stated that Fall maintenance on the grass at the cemetery would begin soon.

Water and Sewer: Bo Rhyne reported another water leak on River Street resulting in large puddles in the street.

Streets and Sanitation: Kathy Rhyne stated that she had inspected the sidewalk a N. Lincoln Street and Frye Street and recommended that some kind of handrails be installed where there is a steep drop off.

Parks/Recreation: Bobby Vassey reported that Yard of the Month was awarded to Kenneth Henderlink at 108 North Street.

Kathy Rhyne distributed an agenda or schedule of events for the City's 50 year celebration.

Vehicles: Mayor Rathbone reported that vehicle HS-1 is out of use. It needs a new transmission.

Administration: Mayor Rathbone reported that he had been contacted by a young man working on his Eagle Scout membership who wants to raise funds and install a 50-foot flag pole at the City Park.

Public Hearing – CDBG-I Application: Kathy Rhyne moved to open a public hearing regarding the City submitting an application to the NC Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for Community Development Block grant funds for infrastructure. Denese Cook seconded the motion and all approved. Mayor Rathbone asked Steve Austin, CDBG Administrator, to provide background information about the application. Mr. Austin state that the City is requesting FY 2023 funds for the High Shoals Water System Replacement Phase 2 project. He said applications are being accepted through October 2, 2023 for the FY 2023 CDBG funds. However, a public hearing is required for this new round. The maximum amount a local government may apply for is \$3 million every three years. No local matching funds are required. These are the same funds that the City currently using to replace water lines on N. Lincoln Street, Thompkins Street, Old Harding Road and Frye Street. All CDBG funds must benefit low and moderate income household or areas.

The City of High Shoals is requesting \$1,703,309 in CDBG-I funds to install approximately 2,950 LF of 12" water lines and appurtenances along the entire length of River Street serving 36 single family homes within the City. All homes in the project area will be reconnected at no cost to the customers. He said this is a resubmission of the same project that the City submitted in May 2023. That round of funding was held because the state did not fund all the applications that were submitted last fall. The City was not funded in that round but was advised by DEQ to resubmit a new application for the Fall 2023 funding round, but in order to reapply the City must conduct another public hearing. This project is listed as priority 1 in the City's capital improvement plan adopted by Council in March 2023.

He said that each year the State of North Carolina receives between \$40-\$45 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Of that amount approximately \$18 million is available to local governments for qualifying water and/or sewer infrastructure projects this Fall 2023 funding round.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$1,703,309 which includes all construction, engineering, construction oversight and grant administrative costs for the project. The cost

estimate and preliminary engineering report/design was provided by The Thrasher Group North Carolina, Inc. for this application.

Mr. Austin said that a resolution authorizing the Mayor, P.J. Rathbone, to submit a Community Development Block Grant application to the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) in their Water-Infrastructure category is required for the City to apply for funds. He also said that if the resolution is approved that a Council member other than the Mayor must sign it. Approval of the resolution is the only action required at this time after receiving citizen comments and questions.

Mayor Rathbone asked if anyone in the audience had any comments or questions about the proposed application. There were none.

Kathy Rhyne moved to close the public hearing. Bobby Vassey seconded the motion and all approved.

Kathy Rhyne moved to approve the resolution for the City to submit a 2023 CDBG-I application. Bobby Vassey seconded and all approved.

Public Hearing – CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization funding First Public Hearing:

Kathy Rhyne made a motion to open a public hearing regarding the City applying for FY 23 CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization funds. Denese Cook seconded and all approved.

Mayor Rathbone asked Steve Austin to provide background information about the hearing. Mr. Austin stated that each year the State of North Carolina receives between \$40-\$45 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. These funds are available to local governments for community and economic development projects that serve low and moderate income households. Incomes are based on family size. This is the same source of funds that the City has received for its most recent Revitalization Grant.

In order to apply for these funds, a local government must hold two public hearings. The first is a “generic” hearing to announce that the CDBG funds are available and to allow persons or groups to take part in the planning of grant applications. This first public hearing is good for any and all CDBG applications that the City may submit in one funding year. A second public hearing is subsequently held for each specific application submitted to the state for approval. The application deadline for the Neighborhood Revitalization program is October 2, 2023. The state has several categories of eligible CDBG projects including economic development, infrastructure, and neighborhood revitalization.

He said a second public hearing would be held in September based on a specific project application. The purpose of this first hearing is to announce the funding availability and receive any public comments or questions about the program. Mayor Rathbone asked if anyone in the audience had any questions or comments. There were none.

Kathy Rhyne moved to close the public hearing. Bobby Vassey seconded and all approved.

Old Business:

Discussion/Action: Pumps for Lift Station: Mayor Rathbone reported that two of the three pumps at the lift station need to be replaced. He said the cost would be \$13,000 for the two. He also said the that new subdivision developer had agreed to provide \$10,000 toward that cost. Bo Rhyne moved to authorize the purchase of two lift station pumps from Carolina List Station in the amount of \$13,000. Bobby Vassey seconded the motion and all approved. The funds would come from the Water and Sewer fund – sewer contracted services.

New Business:

Discussion/Action: Closed Session General Statute 143-318.11(6): Kathy Rhyne moved to go into closed session. Bobby seconded the motion and all approved.

The Mayor reopened the regular Council meeting at 7:45 pm after the closed session.

Discussion/Action: CDL Training: A motion was made to send employee Robby Dusch to CDL training at a cost of \$4,900. The motion was made by Denese Cook to approved the CDL training. Kathy Rhyne seconded the motion and all approved.

Discussion/Action: Park Expansion: Mayor Rathbone asked that this item be tabled until the September 2023 meeting.

Discussion/Action: Gastonia Surplus Sanitation Truck: Mayor Rathbone reported that the City of Gastonia had a surplus sanitation truck available for purchase. He said it is a larger truck that the City currently owns and could potentially collect all the city garbage without having to go to the landfill more than once. He said he had inspected the truck and that it works. It may need new tires he said. Kathy Rhyne moved to authorize the purchase of the Gastonia sanitation truck up to a cost of \$8,000 from the general fund. Babby Vassey seconded and all approved.

Discussion/Action: Trailer/manlift: Denese Cook moved to purchase a manlift for city maintenance projects from United Rental and to seek to finance the purchase over a 60 month period. Bobby Vassey seconded the motion and all approved.

Discussion/Action: Sidewalk at N. Lincoln Street and Frye Street: Kathy Rhyne asked the Council to consider moving the sidewalk at N. Lincoln Street and Frye Street relocated to street level. The sidewalk is currently located at the top of the hill in front of the houses. It was placed there before the new Business 321 bridge was built and the overall street was lowered. Mayor Rathbone asked her to propose the project is upcoming budget meetings and to perhaps construct sidewalk as funds are available be between Frye Street and the 321 bridge.

Discussion/Action: Water MOU (Dallas): Mayor Rathbone presented a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of High Shoals, the Town of Dallas and Gaston County regarding the construction of a new water line along Highway 321-A from Dallas to the High Shoals southern city limit on S. Lincoln Street to connect the City of High Shoals with the Town of Dallas water system. This connection would more that double the City's water capacity and allow for future

development. The memo only states that all local governments agree to participate the planning, construction and connection of the line. Dennis Cash moved to approve the memorandum of understanding and Bo Rhyne seconded. All approved.

Motion to Adjourn: A motion was made to adjourn and seconded and all approved.

P.J. Rathbone, Mayor

Minutes by:

Brandi Strange
City Clerk