

CITY OF HIGH SHOALS
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
March 29, 2022

Call to Order: The City of High Shoals was called to order on March 29, 2022 at 6:30 pm. Present at the meeting were PJ Rathbone, Jimmy Laws, Kathy Rhyne, Bobby Vassey, Bo Rhyne, Denese Cook, and Dennis Cash.

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Agenda: The Mayor asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Dennis Cash requested that a resolution be added called the Gaston County Fire Protection Service Tax District.

A motion was made by Denese Cook and seconded by Bo Rhyne to add the resolution under new business. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments: Jimmy Laws stepped to the podium to say that he had been volunteering to help the City workers out in the community. He stated that the staff was not asking for help or complaining. He said they have a lot on their plate and he has free time and enjoyed helping out. He also said he understood that the question of adding addition staff could not take place until the next budget is adopted. The Mayor said the City needs to add more staff in the new budget and thanked the staff and Jimmy Laws for all they do.

Good of the Order: No comments.

New Business:

Discussion/Action – High Shoals Water CDBG Project Bids: Mayor Rathbone said that the City had held a bid opening on March 18, 2022 for the High Shoals Water Community Development Block Grant project. The City received three bids. Don Smith, the project engineer, reviewed the certified bid tabulations with the Council and stated that the low bidder was Two Brothers Utilities, LLC from Shelby, NC. Their bid was for \$1,466,389.67. He stated that each bidder was to provide two alternate bids for the project. Alternate 1 included the use of PVC water pipe in most of the project. Alternate 2 included the use of ductile iron pipes throughout the project. The reason for the alternates was to see which type of pipe would be less expensive due to supply chain issues. The Mayor said he preferred PVC pipe. Steve Austin, grant administrator, said that the Two Brothers bid was approximately \$89,000 below the project grant construction budget, which would provide the City with a good cushion of extra funds in case there was a need for change orders once construction begins.

A motion was made by Kathy Rhyne and seconded by Bo Rhyne to accept the bid from Two Brothers Utilities, LLC at \$1,466,389.67 for Bid Alternate 1 (PVC pipe). The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action – Rural Transformation Grant: Steve Austin distributed information on the newly announced Rural Transformation Grant from the NC Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Division. The grant allows eligible local governments to apply for up to \$950,000 under a variety of categories including Downtown Revitalization, Resilient Neighborhoods, Community Enhancement for Economic Growth and Rural Community Capacity Building. He said the Resilient Neighborhoods category would most likely be a best option for the City. Ideas discussed included a community center and purchasing vacant dwellings for repair and resale as examples. He recommended that the Council take and review the materials and think of projects that could make a big impact on the City.

A motion was made by Denese Cook and seconded by Dennis Cash to table this discussion until the April 12, 2022 regular council meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action – Fire Department Resolution: Dennis Cash presented the Council with the Gaston County Fire Protection Service Tax Resolution. The resolution would allow the North Gaston Volunteer Fire Department to join other fire districts in the County by letting the County collect the district's fire tax along with most of the rest of the County and then distribute back to the fire district fire departments. He said that the fire department would most likely receive more money and that the County would be responsible for replacing trucks and equipment.

A motion was made by Jimmy Laws and seconded by Bo Rhyne to adopt the Gaston County Fire Protection Service Tax Resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

Kathy Rhyne made a motion to adjourn and everybody seconded. It passed unanimously.

P.J. Rathbone, Mayor

Minutes by:

Steve Austin
CDBG Administrator